



# CHRISTIANITY TODAY

PUBLISHED FORTNIGHTLY

Christ's Finality: A Lost Vision?

F. CAWLEY

The Richness of the Ascension

ROBERT H. LAUER

NAE Convention Report

PETER DE VISSER

EDITORIAL:

Missions at New Delhi

ECUMENICAL SYMPOSIUM

A New Crisis in Missions?

A MAJOR REVIEW



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THIS ISSUE EXCEEDS 172,500 COPIES

★ On the opposite page begins the longest essay yet carried in a single issue of *CHRISTIANITY TODAY*. It focuses attention on a new book, off the press this week, which discloses far-reaching influences now divergently shaping the philosophy of the Christian mission around the world. Discussion of contemporary mission strategy promises to dominate the theological horizon as a prelude to the World Council of Churches' assembly in New Delhi in the late fall. The editorial on page 24, "Missions at Delhi," is a companion piece to the 11-page article, "A New Crisis in Foreign Missions?"

★ How meaningful is the distinction between "conservative" and "progressive"? The Dutch theologian Dr. G. C. Berkouwer explores this dilemma on page 48.

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# A New Crisis in Foreign Missions?

Christendom is facing a new crisis over foreign missions because missionary statesmen differ tellingly both over the definition of the Gospel and over the Christian approach to the pagan world religions.

This momentous crisis in Protestant Christianity has *organizational* as well as *theological* implications. Is the foreign missions enterprise to be totally and permanently integrated into the ecclesiastical framework and control of the World Council of Churches? Many churchmen expect a major move in this direction will occur November 17 to December 6, 1961, with the integration of WCC and the International Missionary Council at the New Delhi Assembly.

Underlying most of the dissatisfaction over ecumenical mergers is a *theological* protest. From the outset theological inclusivism has haunted the ecumenical venture. It has sheltered not only evangelical but liberal (and more latterly neo-orthodox) and for a season even humanist views with equal welcome.

Twice in the twentieth century the Christian missionary movement around the world has been shaken by theological controversies. First, echoes of W. E. Hocking's *Re-Thinking Missions* (1932) resounded from the Alaskan wastes to the African jungles. Then Hendrik Kraemer's *The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World* (1938) framed the issues in a new albeit controversial setting.

This month an ecumenical symposium on *The Theology of the Christian Mission* (Gerald H. Anderson, ed., McGraw-Hill, \$5.95) may rock the Christian

world missionary venture afresh. Although the new volume is not an official ecumenical document, it has had private encouragement and commendation from highly placed ecumenical leaders in missions. As a supplement to Dr. Anderson's doctoral dissertation at Boston University on *The Theology of Missions*, 1928-1958, the volume sets in perspective, in somewhat loosely-related essays, the views of influential ecumenical spokesmen. Statements on the meaning of Christianity and its relation to the non-Christian religions by distinguished scholars (Barth, Bouquet, Cullmann, DeWolf, Kraemer, and Tillich among them) are likely to constitute this volume a center of debate for some time. Kraemer, former director of the Ecumenical Institute, who at first declined to participate in the symposium, wrote a short and sharp essay of indignation over current ecumenical missions trends.

Although this controversial work includes essays that are theologically disappointing, some even biblically objectionable, it contains also some first-rate biblical theology. The title ambitiously promises a statement of *the* theology of the Christian mission. Failure of movements like Evangelical Foreign Missions Association and Interdenominational Foreign Mission Association to produce evangelical statements of similar scope will elevate this volume into required reading and study material even for fundamentalist critics of an inclusive theology. (More than half the world missionary task force remains outside the WCC-IMC framework [the volume concedes that "one third of the total Protestant

## SEARCHING QUESTIONS FACING THE ECUMENICAL WITNESS

A symposium like *The Theology of the Christian Mission* inevitably raises searching questions for the Protestant ecumenical movement:

Do these thinkers truly express the governing missionary philosophy of denominations identified with the World Council of Churches?

Will their views be determinative or influential in the International Missionary Council?

If not, why does ecumenical theology confer prestige upon these viewpoints and not upon others?

Will missionary executives in the major denominations explicitly reject non-evangelical points of view and instead

affirm a biblical theology of missions? What of the theological outlook of the missionary task force and of missionary candidates?

Will the WCC-IMC merger be compromised from the outset by an inclusivistic theology or by an evasive silence that holds costly implications for the world-wide missionary venture?

Or will the New Delhi Assembly come down unequivocally on the side of a biblical philosophy of missions, and specifically reject humanistic, liberal, and dialectical speculations?

Answers to such questions will determine the vitality and harmony of Protestant missionary effort around the globe.—ED.

missionary endeavor is administered by agencies that . . . do not cooperate".) The symposium's ecumenical

### HENDRIK KRAEMER'S COMPLAINT

Dr. Kraemer declares that while the ecumenical process reads and registers all views as particular opinions, missionary thinking and strategy actually continue unchanged, without new decisions and actions: "The 'responsible agencies' to which I appealed in 1938 for . . . practical measures to combat syncretism have not responded even to this day. . . . What I do hope and pray for is the awakening of the 'responsible agencies' to the fundamental necessities."

perspective criticizes missionary effort by American independent and nondenominational agencies (said to

be mainly concentrated on neglected fields) as operating outside the churches. While the volume does incorporate the conservative exposition of Christian missions by Harold Lindsell of Fuller Theological Seminary, taken as a whole its statement of the biblical and historical basis of missionary theology is from the ecumenical perspective. As a noteworthy ecumenical thrust on the eve of the WCC-IMC merger, the book could significantly influence reformulation of missions 1. by its tenuous connection of the missionary task to a nebulous trinitarian theology (sometimes called "radical trinitarian theocentrism"); 2. by relating the ideal completion of mission to the WCC-IMC-identified Church; and 3. by viewing Christianity as the fulfillment (rather than antithesis) of pagan religions.

## WHAT OF NON-CHRISTIAN RELIGIONS?

Since the first Christian era, the critical question on the mission fronts of the world has been: *Of what import is the Christian message to followers of the non-Christian religions?* What of Hinduism and Buddhism? Of Mohammedanism? Of Judaism? Of Communism? The most distressing feature of the ecumenical symposium under review is its ambiguous, often disappointing, and sometimes apostate verdict on this important issue. Missions is the cutting edge of the Church; to dull the blade of evangelism is to doom Christianity.

In the background of essays relevant to this question stands the twentieth century clash over missions philosophy. This is recalled also as the conflict between the liberal theology of immanence (represented by Hocking) and the dialectical theology of transcendence (represented by Kraemer). The former view asserts the direct continuity of all religions (based on a supposed common religious essence), while the latter, at least in Barthian form, asserts the absolute discontinuity of Christianity from the non-Christian religions. The dialectical view, however, is not to be equated with the historic Christian view of the antithesis between Christianity and paganism; to do so would be a hasty misidentification, as we shall see.

Both Roman Catholicism and the Protestant Reformation asserted the fact of an antithesis. But Romanism stressed "Logos theology" (natural theology), while historic Protestantism emphasized the broken *imago Dei* and the priority of scriptural revelation.

In noting their emphasis on the inadequacy of non-Christian religions, even Lindsell's exposition may give Kraemer and the 1938 Madras Conference too much credit. In common with dialectical thinkers,

Kraemer considers apostolic Christianity to be under divine judgment no less than the non-Christian religions: "All historic religions in their concrete manifestations are syncretistic in different respects. This includes the three great religions which are *basically* antisyncretistic, Christianity, Judaism, and Islam." While Kraemer affirms the Christian revelation to be "absolute, incomparable and *sui generis*," he nonetheless calls for "appreciation of the high values" in non-Christian religions. On the other hand, Lindsell (while not hesitating elsewhere to concede impurity and even apostasy in the historic development of the Church) insists on infallible apostolic writings, and declares that "at best . . . all non-Christian religions are counterfeits of the one true faith." The inadequacy of the non-Christian religions lies, for Lindsell, in the circumstance that they, unlike revealed religion, are under the judgment of God and cannot provide salvation; their devotees are improperly related to God. Christianity alone leads to everlasting life. For a conservative philosophy of missions, as Lindsell puts it, "eclecticism has no part . . . and the exclusiveness of Christianity is assumed."

Most of the essayists claim to support the absolute-ness of the Christian religion. Tillich, one of the exceptions, is happier to assert "universality" rather than "absoluteness." Even here, he states, there is no *theoretical* proof of the universal validity of Christianity, nor of the claim that Jesus is the Christ. It would be interesting indeed, in view of this, to know the Harvard theologian's private reflections on a New Testament declaration such as I John 2:22, "Who is the liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ?" (RSV). For Tillich the only "proof" is *pragmatic*, that

is, the verdict of faith. But Floyd H. Ross waves aside Tillich's attempt to salvage Christ's universality rather than his absoluteness. Understanding the essential relativism of Tillich's position, Ross bluntly declares his approval of Tillich's and Berdyaev's view that Christianity is neither final nor universal.

As a dominant trend the symposium essayists see Christianity as the *fulfillment* rather than the *contradiction* of the heathen religions, and emphasize "the good in all religions." This mood sometimes includes regard even for atheistic communism as a constructive preparation for Christianity, or, on the other hand, abrogates the need, so clearly stressed in the New Testament, for evangelizing the Jews.

Although the *fulfillment* thesis is supported zealously by A. C. Bouquet, L. Harold DeWolf, Ernest Benz, Tillich, and Ross, their expositions lead along somewhat divergent roadways. Even F. N. Davey, whose essay on "The Gospel According to St. John and the Christian Mission" incorporates a generous measure of biblical theology, declares that "some men may find true discernment in a particular religion, however primitive, however crude."

The neo-orthodox emphasis of Barth and Kraemer on "discontinuity" is quite swiftly set aside by most of the writers. Bouquet stresses that neither Nathan Söderblom nor William Temple held so dim a view of the non-Christian religions, and that B. F. Westcott regarded Christianity as bringing into balance the emphases that other religions exaggerate. DeWolf declares that "few missionaries today, except some from the extreme Fundamentalist sects," now ask (as did most earlier Protestant missionaries) for "total rejection" and "radical displacement" of the pagan religions. He assails Kraemer's assertion of the absoluteness of "the Christian revelation" (itself a compromise of the historic evangelical proclamation of *the Christian religion*). Asks DeWolf: Does not Kraemer's interpretation of this revelation and its claim "constitute a part of religion . . . ? On what ground," he asks, "does Kraemer's understanding of the Word escape the relativism of all religion?" This is sound internal criticism, since Kraemer brings *all* religious experience under divine judgment. But DeWolf follows the observation to lower rather than to higher ground.

For Bouquet and DeWolf the alternative to "discontinuity" is "fulfillment." This DeWolf contrasts with "relativistic syncretism," or a regard for all religions as paths to the same Reality. Both these scholars believe that devotees of the non-Christian religions are prepared thereby for the Gospel. Whether these thinkers successfully escape religious relativism (except in terms of semantic legerdemain) is best judged by a closer look at their views.

*Bouquet's View.* The "fulfillment" thesis Bouquet

spells out in his essay, "Revelation and the Divine Logos." In respect to the Divine Logos, he argues, the author of the Fourth Gospel "certainly employed" the language-and-thought form of the Hellenistic Jewish and Gentile world, where the idea of the Self-Expression of Ultimate Divinity was familiar. Such (presumed) "endorsement" of this idea was either "a fundamental mistake" or "a sign of growing into truth under the guidance of the Holy Spirit." The latter option (which Bouquet supports) vindicates adoption of this pattern today in dealing with all non-Christian religious movements. John's Prologue was "perhaps the first serious attempt" to relate "the Christian God-story to the religious beliefs of the Gentile world." Bouquet therefore lightly waves aside the historic Protestant insistence that a Jewish rather than Gentile use stands behind the Logos passage. He even thinks it "not unreasonable" to find in this Prologue (in the second century A.D.!) an echo of the ancient teaching of Heraclitus. "The point to be emphasized is that some sort of incarnation of the Cosmic Logos, albeit usually a mythical one, was a familiar idea to many educated Gentiles at the time when the Johannine writings came to be composed. . . ." Bouquet, moreover, regards the Logos-insights of Gentile philosophers as "part of that growing into truth" which the Johannine Christ promises his disciples (cf. John 14:25, but note also 15:26). This universal Logos-approach Bouquet then applies also to Zarathustra, Buddha, and other pagan religious figures.

As a result of the finiteness and rebelliousness of human nature, Bouquet grants, "a good deal of philosophy . . . is not obedient to the Universal Logos, and . . . may therefore contradict the Concrete Logos." But he holds that such disobedience characterizes Christianity too (presumably even within the so-called biblical norm). Bouquet's criterion for judging whether a Christian sage or prophet "strives after" the truth and lives in tune with the Logos is "the same criterion" used by the first Christians, that is (according to Bouquet), "the unique and overwhelming personality of the historical Jesus, and . . . the spectacle of good and earnest teachers who were not Christians." The complex, confusing, and highly subjective nature of Bouquet's criterion seems obvious, and his exposition quickly destroys what special relevance he hopes to preserve for Christ. Although Bouquet insists Jesus was an historical figure of momentous importance (whose earthly career is "a supreme event in the life of the Eternal Deity, and an event in the spatiotemporal order by which something decisive for the human race was achieved"), he soon dissolves the scandal of the God-man. Philosophers are living according to the Logos, we are told, insofar as they strive after and believe that the universe is truly interpreted as the

embodiment of a single spiritual and moral formula, "whether they accept Christ or not."

The Logos doctrine, Bouquet contends, allows non-Christian sages to supply a theological background for converts to Christianity. It is not impossible, he thinks, to speak of "Christian Buddhists, Christian Moslems, Christian Vedantists, and Christian Confucians." The names of these great sages, he adds, might be "preserved and revered, yet without the essence of Christian doctrine being contaminated."

Bouquet's emphasis on universally accessible facets of one Divine Truth permeating all religions comes in the last analysis to overwhelm his corollary emphasis on the supremacy of Jesus. He writes: "It would surely be foolish not to use . . . the witness of *Svetasvatara Upanishad* in the matter of theism, or the witness of an inspired teacher like Shinran to the doctrine of *sola fide*, even though the trust in merits of Amida is in itself only trust in a myth." The least that one must say about Bouquet's proposal is that it conceals the apostolic reliance on "the foolishness of preaching" a specially revealed God, and that, moreover, it would have required the apostles instead to have buttressed the case for theism by a reliance on those pagan Graeco-Roman philosophies and religions which they shunned like the black plague.

*DeWolf's View.* In his essay "The Interpretation of Christianity and the Non-Christian Religions," DeWolf notes that most Christian scholars regard their faith as a fulfillment rather than a radical displacement of Judaism. But what of its relation to other religions?

To begin with, DeWolf affirms "the unrivaled originality of Israel's tradition." But he also stresses the continuity of biblical with non-biblical religion in terms that seem still to reflect the now widely-discredited Wellhausen criticism of the nineteenth century: "Few Old Testament scholars would defend the doctrine that no other religions contributed to the religion of the ancient Hebrews. . . . Various scholars believe that they can find evidences in the ancient Old Testament religion of contributions from the Egyptians, Midianites, Canaanites, and Babylonians." "The Christian teachings in the New Testament include contributions from other religions in addition to . . . Judaism," such as Hellenistic philosophy, mystery religions, and Persian influence. As DeWolf sees it, "much in paganism" is similar to Christian doctrine and worship.

DeWolf appeals to four considerations in support of his thesis of the continuity of all religions and of their serviceability as a preparation for the Gospel. The first, curiously, is to "biblical testimony." Even if we were to grant his disputable interpretation of the verses he cites (John 1:9; Acts 14:17), which we refuse, we must note that by his "biblical appeal" DeWolf, like

so many liberal theologians, is hoisted by his own petard. These men appeal to the Bible when they think it suits their purpose, but they disallow evangelicals the same decisive appeal over against liberal speculations. In addition, DeWolf sketchily refers, in support of the dogma of the universal continuity of religions, to the Logos doctrine in patristic church history; the missionary's "inevitable" use of meanings communicated by rival religions; and the doctrine of "the Trinity" (DeWolf downgrades Christological revelation and defers to the universal activity of the Holy Spirit).

*Tillich's View.* Tillich contributes the essay "Missions and History." Stated in religious-mythological language, Tillich tells us, the conflict of world history is a conflict between divine and demonic forces. As is well known, Tillich's *Systematic Theology* denies the existence of an objectively real personal God.

In a profoundly unbiblical presentation which fails to grasp the crucial difference between the Church and the world, he affirms that the Church is "latently present" in paganism, humanism, and Judaism. "People are not *outside* of God; they are *grasped* by God on the level in which they *can* be grasped—in their experience of the Divine, in the realm of holiness in which they are living . . . even though the symbols in which the Holy is expressed may seem extremely primitive and idolatrous." Christian mission aims, we are told, to transform this latency into existential reality. The Christian Church is the historical representative of the kingdom of God which, for Tillich, becomes a symbol for the unity of history in and above history.

Tillich boldly sets aside the finality of Jesus of Nazareth. The goal of history, he tells us, is "never actualized in history." The "moment" in which the meaning of history becomes fully manifest, or the center of history, is "the New Being in Jesus as the Christ." This center is not A.D. 1-30, but is existential: "Many people, even today, are living *before* the event of Jesus as the Christ." The reader must not, therefore, confuse "the power of the New Being which is in the Christ" with Jesus of Nazareth. Although Tillich stresses only that his "New Being in Christ" (or Christ-abstraction, shall we say) judges Christianity as critically as non-Christian religions, he does not trouble to stress the fact that, in his speculative *gnosis*, this abstraction judges Jesus of Nazareth also.

It should surprise nobody that Tillich's view eliminates the need for evangelizing the Jews. While Christians should be open to individual Jews wanting to become Christians, Tillich holds that "one should not try to convert them." Rather, Christians should subject themselves to the criticism of Hebrew prophetic tradition. Here, again, Tillich misses the significance of special historical revelation objectively climaxed in

Jesus Christ, and dilutes the essence of redemptive religion to a speculative idealism in which the scandal of the Cross is gone. Any reconstruction of Christianity which loses the New Testament compulsion to address "the Jew first," by so much the more seems to us consistently foredoomed to surrender its redemptive concern for "the Gentiles also."

**Ross' View.** In his essay "The Christian Revelation in Larger Dimension," Floyd H. Ross follows the "comparative religions" approach down the highway of religious relativism. He writes: "The Christian mission today involves bearing witness to a profound search for living truth which can never be confined within any language, theological or non-theological, Christian or non-Christian." "God is known in relative ways only, even in those traditions that claim special revelation. . . ." "The Gospel is not . . . delivered from the relativities of history. . . ." It should be obvious that, given Ross' assumptions, whatever he may say about "the Christian revelation" must involve his surrender of a faith "once for all delivered to the saints." The once-for-all divine incarnation of God in Christ is also dissolved.

Since both religions affirm that "the ultimate invades history," Ross asserts that "what is intended by the Hindu teaching of recurring incarnation is not as far removed from the Christian doctrine of incarnation as is sometimes claimed."

### MISGUIDED ZEAL?

The Christian must accept the possibility (we are told) that the early Christians "may have been overzealous" in affirming "there is no other name given under heaven" for the salvation of men. That the Christian finds God's decisive act in the person and work of Jesus Christ "does not rule out entertaining the possibility that this decisive act may point to that which has been experienced as reality in other modes and under other names."—Floyd H. Ross, in *The Theology of the Christian Mission*, p. 219.

One is tempted to range Paul's declaration that the Gentiles are "haters of God" (Rom. 1:30) alongside Ross' regard for "the human thirst for ultimate meaning . . . as universal," and to set Jesus' claim that "no man cometh to the Father but by me" (John 14:6) alongside Ross' assertion that "I do not think evidence can be adduced to support the claim that only in Christianity can this thirst be satisfied." Subjectivism so permeates the contributor's viewpoint that one is struck by the implication of the universal validity of his own opinions. He writes: "A confession of faith always testifies to what has happened in my or our history, *not in history as such*. . . . The 'language' of religion is the language of myth and poetry. . . ."

We are informed that the early Christian claims for

Jesus the Christ were "in the mythic dimension" and that all of these themes are . . . paralleled over and over again in the religions of mankind."

### THE DIMENSION OF MYTH?

"All of the early Christians' affirmations about Jesus the Christ were in the mythic dimension. They believed that Christ was in some sense the 'Messiah,' or the 'Son of Man,' or the 'Son of God.' Some believed that he had a 'virgin birth.' All of these themes are ancient mythic themes, paralleled over and over again in the religions of mankind. That God 'chose' one race to be 'his people,' that Jesus was a preexistent 'divine being' whose coming marks the end of the 'present age,' that God let 'His Son' die on a cross in order that the 'Son's' death might obtain 'atonement for the sins of man,' that through Christ's 'resurrection' the demonic powers of the world have been robbed of their dominion, that Christ will return on the clouds in his glory to finish his work of destroying sin, suffering, and death, that 'there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved—all of this is mythic."—Floyd H. Ross, in *The Theology of the Christian Mission* (Gerald H. Anderson, ed.), pp. 221 ff.

Those outside the circle of faith are needlessly confused when this mythic-confessional language is treated literally or historically, we are told. "When the mythic has been denied or repressed, Christians have taken refuge in sterile liberalisms, legalisms, fundamentalisms and brittle dogmatisms." "In ordinary history it can be said that every event is unique or once-for-all; but in 'sacred history' once-for-allness refers to a dimension of meaning that is felt to be time-transcending and time-transforming." "To identify faith with a particular expression of faith is to fall into idolatry." "Christian myth is 'truer' than Christian history for those who believe, for myth has its vitality prior to either the proof or disproof of any specific event or series of events." The mythic dimension invites man to live ever more deeply "by faith, not by fact."

Ross' non-historical mythic emphasis seems to dissolve belief both in an end-time of history and in the second coming of Christ; these concepts are attributed to mistaken historical expectations of the early Church. "The nonfulfillment of that literal expectation did not kill off the Church, very probably because that belief, like others, was rooted in the mythic depths of their lives and was not tied to historical 'fact.'"

**Benz's View.** Propounding "Ideas for a Theology of the History of Religion," Ernest Benz rejects both dialectical theology's assertion of absolute discontinuity between Christianity and non-Christian religions and Roman Catholicism's affirmation of their continuity on the basis of "Logos theology." This dual rejection is a good beginning, but Benz then moves, not toward an evangelical assessment, but rather toward a heightened

emphasis on continuity. His dissatisfaction with the neo-orthodox and Romanist views springs specially from their limitation of salvation history before Christ to the Old Testament-related events, and from their closing of the history of religion with the appearance of Jesus Christ. Evangelical Christianity also requires this limitation. Against this, Benz pleads the case of the extra-biblical and the post-Christian religions. He proposes a reconstruction of the history of religion that relates other religions affirmatively to Christianity, rather than as heretical or as demonic independent movements.

The universal cosmic revelation of God, Benz asserts, not only opposes the thesis of absolute discontinuity, but it also disputes any declaration of absoluteness for Christianity alone. Benz assures us, however, that "an exclusive claim to absoluteness . . . is not the only self-evident and determinative attitude to be found in the New Testament." The apostles of first century Christianity would have been shocked at this misunderstanding, for both the martyr spirit of Christian missions and the crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth center in the question of the absoluteness of Christianity.

### A STRANGE GOSPEL

"Jesus promises that even those who have never heard of him, heathen and non-Christians, who to their own surprise turn out to be Christians because they have fulfilled the command of love, will be received into the Kingdom of God and will sit at table there with him. . . . The criterion which determines the consignment of men to the Kingdom of God or to outer darkness is not a definite doctrine about Christ, not a recognition of the Christian claim to absoluteness, nor is it even a knowledge of the historical figure of Jesus. . . ." —Ernest Benz, in *The Theology of The Christian Mission* (Gerald H. Anderson, ed.).

Benz points to those who have changed their faith to Christianity from non-Christian religions as vindicating a role for all religions within the context of "a universal and exclusive idea of religion." He thinks Kagawa avoided relativizing religions—even though he surrendered "the traditional formulation of the Christian claim to absoluteness in its exclusive form." Benz's ambiguous closing verdict is that even though Christ alone leads to the summit, yet religions nonetheless differ from each other only in degree. We note how difficult it is to reconcile this position with Jesus' own teaching ("I am the door. . . . All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers," John 10:7 f.). Benz implies that no New Testament guidance exists for understanding extra-biblical and non-Christian religions. But does not the apostle Paul relate both the prehistoric past and the post-New Testament present to the Christian understanding of salvation history? Paul did not, of course, share these subjective philosophical assumptions which drive Benz to find a "myth-

ological picture of history" in the Bible, and therefore to attack the assurance that in Christ the history of religion has "already found its fulfillment, its suspension and historical conclusion." Indeed, for Paul the fact that Christ alone leads to the summit distinguishes Christianity in kind, not merely in degree, from the non-Christian religions.

**Doi's View.** In his chapter on "The Nature of Encounter between Christianity and Other Religions as Witnessed on the Japanese Scene," Masatoshi Doi treats Christianity merely as dialectical-existential encounter. He rejects the universal Logos as the criterion of truth, and scorns doctrinal Christianity. He insists nonetheless on truth in other religions.

Doi characterizes Christianity as a "distorted response" to divine revelation which "stands under judgment of God just as do all other religions." Like other religions, Christianity for him is a synthesis of different cultural and religious elements, and therefore continuous with other religions.

Reporting on a survey of 52 "converts" to Christianity, Doi observes that 48 per cent viewed Christianity as "fulfillment" and 37 per cent as "total negation" of their former religion. Doi disparages the fundamentalist tendency to speak of "total negation," dismissing it on the ground that its followers are "strongly indoctrinated with absolutist tenets." But he commends those who speak in terms of "fulfillment" as "theological unbiased!"

Doi disparages Christianity as a unique religion of historical revelation and divinely revealed truths. Instead of a revelational center in Jesus of Nazareth, he postulates an existential center for spiritual life. Doi says "the central core of the religious experience, which is involved in the encounter between Christianity and other religions, is the existential commitment of a person, who has been brought up in a definite religious tradition, to God who revealed Himself in an historical event as the ultimately meaningful reality. . . . No historical event can be ultimately meaningful unless there is an experiencing subject who accepts it as ultimately meaningful. . . ."

### VERSUS PURE DOCTRINE

"Faith is not bound by any particular system of dogmas or ideas. . . . As man's free response to the divine act it has the freedom to choose between various doctrines, ideas and cultural patterns so that it may be able to create a new system of doctrines and ideas . . . in accord with the historical situation in which the believer stands. . . . If too much emphasis is laid upon criticism for the sake of purity of doctrine, Christianity tends to become abstract and to remain aloof from the religious and cultural situation in which it stands." —Masatoshi Doi, in *The Theology of the Christian Mission* (Gerald H. Anderson, ed.).

*Devanandan's View.* In "The Resurgence of Non-Christian Religions" Paul D. Devanandan writes on modern man's quest for understanding the real nature and significance of religion . . . underlying religions," that is, on "the trend to discover a common formula of belief." While religions have their doctrinal differences, he declares that "the dynamic of faith" undergirding these concepts, and the concern for man, is not peculiar to any one religion. He approves the existential notion that the line between unredeemed and redeemed runs not "between heathen and Christian"; rather, "the unredeemed 'old man' of the New Testament is to be found in me, a Christian . . . in exactly the same terms as . . . in the non-Christian."

"Christians should seriously heed" the invitation to "interreligious cooperation." Christian evangelists should join with non-Christians against the secularists who disapprove of a resurgence of religions. Certain Christian truths, once borrowed, are now woven into the fabric of non-Christian religions, he contends. He doubts that the preaching of the Gospel is "directed to the total annihilation of all other religions than of Christianity." The end-result of Devanandan's approach, it would seem, is the surrender of any decisive Christian message to the non-Christian religions, and particularly the loss of the conviction that only they are saved who confess that Jesus is Lord and believe that he is risen from the dead (Rom. 10:9; cf. 10:12).

## THE LONG SWEEP OF HISTORY

It would be manifestly unfair to imply that the views of most contributors to *The Theology of the Christian Mission* are objectionable. Some essays are mainly historical, others reflect points of view outside mainstream Protestant ecumenism, some chapters sparkle with sound biblical theology.

Alexander Schmemann writes of "The Missionary

in Post-Reformation Scholasticism, extreme Calvinism throttled missionary concern. Meanwhile the Anabaptists made the Great Commission binding on every believer. Protestant rationalism dissolved missionary passion by viewing Christianity as a development of universally immanent religion. Pietism kept alive the missionary burden. Mr. Hogg implies a link between the transformation of outlook in our century (by 1900 it was recognized that all churches and all believers have a missionary debt) and the emergence of the modern ecumenical movement. But it is surely clear, we think, that the preponderance of the missionary task force, even to this day, gains its inspiration and outlook more from biblical than from modern sources.

In "The Free Church View of Missions," Franklin H. Littell asserts that the real epoch of Christian universalism began with Pietism on the Continent and the Evangelical Awakening in Britain. With an eye on the broken identification of the Western civilization

### A 'POST-CHRISTIAN' AGE

"The impossibility of any longer assuming that missions proceed from a Christian West and take the Gospel and benefits of 'Christian civilization' to the non-Western, non-Christian world is a major key to the crisis of the Christian mission in the mid-twentieth century."—William Richey Hogg, in *The Theology of the Christian Mission* (Gerald H. Anderson, ed.).

Imperative in the Orthodox Tradition," and struggles against the charge that the Eastern Orthodox Church is nonmissionary, or that its missionary activity is a mere epiphenomenon of its sacramental, liturgical, mystical ethos. Andrew V. Seumois, tracing "The Evolution of Mission Theology Among Roman Catholics," concedes that his communion has neglected the theology of mission, and that Romish works on the subject in the twentieth century have borrowed Protestant ideas. He calls for a systematic missiology based upon revelation and "the light of early tradition" and reports that Rome is already justifying lay missionaries by a theological framework. William Richey Hogg, surveying "The Rise of Protestant Missionary Concern, 1517-1914," shows that Romanism's traditional unconcern for missions sprang from its practice of Christian conquest en masse by the emperor's forced rule and religion. But the Protestant Reformation, too, he notes, shaped no theology of missions, and had no concern for overseas non-Christians. Luther thought the Great Commission had been fulfilled by the apostles, and,

### A SETTING OF HOSTILITY

"The 'younger churches' find themselves today in a period of Church history remarkably like that of the early Church. Mystery religions abound; Montanist and Gnostic sects are everywhere apparent; persecution of the Biblical faith is more widespread than ever before. . . . The political powers which so long served to suppress the opposition and support the Christian religion are either unfriendly or neutral. The 'Constantian era' is at an end." Franklin H. Littell, in *The Theology of the Christian Mission* (Gerald H. Anderson, ed.).

with the Christian religion, Littell traces to Hitler's control of the old centers of Christian civilization the shift of missionary support and of manpower sources to the free churches in Britain and especially America. The younger churches of America, once provinces of European Christendom, have now become the source of missionary strength.

## THE MOTIVATION OF MISSION

The crucial test of missionary philosophy is its view of the significance of Jesus Christ both for the Christian and for the non-Christian religions. The motivations that scholars adduce for the Christian mission in the world quickly reveal what significance is attributed to Jesus of Nazareth.

In a forceful essay Oscar Cullman recognizes that the Christian eschatological hope spurred (rather than paralyzed) the Church's missionary impulse. Karl Barth's warm exegetical study of the Great Commission (Matt. 28:16-20) stresses the significance of Christ's resurrection.

In his essay "Pauline Motives for the Christian Mission," Donald G. Miller lists some of the moving forces for the Christian world-witness: the self-revelation of God; the nature of the Gospel as revealed world-news; the nature of the Church; and the predicament of man. In delineating the predicament of mankind, Miller's emphasis falls on man's self-separation from God; noticeably missing from his exposition is the Pauline stress on God's final wrath and man's utter condemnation in sin.

In general, the essayists hesitate to justify the missionary enterprise as the rescue of men otherwise doomed to hell and eternal punishment (see CHRISTIANITY TODAY, "The Theology of Evangelism," August 3, 1959).

### NO 'ABSOLUTE MESSAGE'?

"As Christians, we should go forth seeking converse with men of other faiths, not offering an absolute message. . . . He who feels he already 'has' the truth does not enter fully into dialogue. . . . As we learn to live more profoundly in faith, we talk less and less about 'the only way' even though we may nourish the hope that we may be 'in the way.'"—Floyd H. Ross, "The Christian Mission in Larger Dimension," in *The Theology of the Christian Mission*.

Paul Tillich most explicitly formulates the revolt against this biblical position: "One should not misunderstand missions as an attempt to save from eternal damnation as many individuals as possible among the nations of the world." Such a view, thinks Tillich, is based on a theology "unworthy of the glory and of the love of God and must be rejected in the name of the true relationship of God to his world." Only because Tillich substitutes his own arbitrary conceptions of the nature of deity for the New Testament revelation does he ignore the difficulties posed by such verses as Matthew 7:23, 18:18, 25:41, 46; John 3:36, 14:6; Acts 4:12; II Corinthians 5:11; I Thessalonians

1:9; II Thessalonians 1:7; and Hebrews 10:31. Missions is not, Tillich thinks, "the attempt to save individual souls. . . . Rather, it is the attempt to transform the latent Church—which is present in the world religions, in paganism, Judaism, and humanism [italics ours]—into . . . the New Reality in Jesus and Christ."

Max Warren, moreover, emphasizes "identification with" others; the Christian is urged to enter into the will of God for non-Christians by loving service in their problem-complex. Warren's exposition of missionary-motive, as an extension of the incarnation-principle, taking manhood up into the Godhead, seems to this reviewer, to soften the scandal of the doctrine of the Cross.

In the main the symposium essayists avoid any grounding of missionary motivation in the authority of Scripture. In "The Rise of Protestant Missionary Concern, 1517-1914," William Richey Hogg views the Reformation "emphasis on the Bible" as severely limiting the concern for unity and mission. On the other hand, Hogg admits that the Westminster Confession's identification of the Bible with the Word of God (rather than merely with "the vehicle of the Word") lifted the Great Commission to relevance, and he grants also that conservative forces paced Germany's nineteenth century missionary outreach.

Although Lindsell's essay on "Fundamentals for a Philosophy of the Christian Mission" does not clash head-on with blatant weaknesses of some essayists (none of the contributors read the others' manuscripts), his survey of the premises undergirding conservative missionary endeavor is simple and direct, and proceeds from the historic evangelical emphasis on Scripture. As motivations he lists: 1. The Bible as the infallible Word of God, conveying propositional truths on the basis of divine disclosure. 2. The revealed Gospel, centering in Christ's expiatory satisfaction for sin and bodily resurrection, which demands repentance and forgiveness. 3. Although original sin has not wholly destroyed the divine image, in sin man is lost, corrupt, guilty, and exposed to divine penalties, including permanent separation from God. 4. The non-Christian religions cannot provide salvation. 5. The Church is a redemptive fellowship which is not to identify itself with the world and the spirit of evil, but rather is to identify itself with lost mankind for the purpose of evangelization.

The motivation of "social action" emerges only incidentally in the symposium. When it does, its covering theme is usually "identification" with the world. Yet Lindsell sees the goal of identification (with sin-

ners in distinction from the world) as evangelization. Medical missions and educational work gain approval not simply as social service (the level on which Hocking justified them) but as means to evangelistic ends. The conservative outlook distinguishes *evangelization* (which does not expect world transformation) from *Christianization*. It looks for Christ's second advent as a necessary prerequisite to the ultimate triumph of God. An Eastern Orthodox contributor, Alexander Schmemann, stresses that his tradition does not regard evangelism as individualistic, but seeks through man to save and redeem the world; state, society, culture, and nature itself are the objects of mission. R. Pierce Beavan, writing for Protestantism on the "apostolic

character" of the contemporary Church in its "ministry of reconciliation," opposes restrictions of mission; for him witnessing includes also the transformation of social life, although this thesis remains undeveloped. Despite its broad focus on "Christian mission" rather than on missions in the traditional sense, the volume does not really clarify the nature of the Church's social task. On the tenuous threshold of WCC-IMC merger, debate is thereby avoided over growing implications that ecumenism (or rather, some ecumenical leadership) serves as Christ's earthly agent of political and socio-economic reconciliation. Extremists have been charged with dignifying their private social and political activities by appealing to the Holy Spirit.

## THE TRINITY AND MISSION

The trinitarian theme, it should be noted, comes spectacularly into the ecumenical foreground through two recent developments. The New Delhi Assembly is scheduled both to assimilate IMC, whose leaders now propound a trinitarian basis of mission, and to act also on a committee recommendation that WCC adopt a trinitarian basis of faith. A soundly biblical trinitarian development in the ecumenical movement would hearten evangelicals. Such a move would clearly put Unitarians outside the Church of Christ (a step long overdue especially in America); it would reinstate neglected aspects of biblical theology in the Church's life and mission; and it might recover for the missionary enterprise the undergirding dynamic of spiritual obedience. Accurate appraisal of any "trinitarian development" is therefore essential.

Wilhelm Andersen sets mission in the trinitarian context of the ecumenical perspective in his essay "Further Toward a Theology of Mission." This essay supplements his 1955 study for IMC "Towards a Theology of Mission." In preliminary theses Andersen summarizes four turning points of the 1952 international missionary conference in Willingen, Germany:

1. "Mission is the work of the triune God" who sent his Son to reconcile, and who continues to move toward man. Hence mission-theory must be God-centered rather than Church-centered.

2. The decisive act of God in fulfilling his missionary will is the Cross of Jesus Christ. The Cross therefore stands necessarily at the center of a theology of missions. (Willingen emphasized more than previous international missions con-claves the centrality of the death and resurrection of Christ, although interpretation was unfortunately colored more by modern dynamic than traditional theological categories.) God "has intervened in history through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ to change the fate of the world. . . . Through the Incarnation, Crucifixion and Resurrection of Jesus Christ,

God has created realities in the course of this world which are immovable."

3. After sending his Son and his Holy Spirit, God founded his Church, and began the task of missions. The Church is called and sent forth as God's instrument. In summary, mission has its trinitarian source, its Christological realization, and its pneumatic fulfillment.

4. The final goal of the *missio Dei* is not the Church but the establishment of God's kingdom. Preoccupation with organization and institution threatens this primary task. (Andersen urges recognition by the proposed IMC-WCC amalgam of this God-centered rather than "Church-centered" basis of mission.)

In his chapter "The Holy Spirit in the Christian Mission," F. W. Dillistone stresses the Holy Spirit's work of motivating missionary service in the world, and not simply the believer's inner sanctification. Dillistone's stimulating exposition is more fully indebted to biblical ideas than one might expect from his disappointing treatment of the Spirit in connection with Scripture. Trinitarian expositions of mission are coming from many ecumenical thinkers today but such theologizing is confused because they disown an authoritative Bible. Andersen, for example, assuredly tells us that "a theology of mission lives from studying the Bible" and thereby proves itself authentic. Moreover, he boldly declares that "the decisive missionary Kerygma to the world begins . . . with the report: 'Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures' (I Cor. 15:3)." The reader must not mistake such statements for pious orthodoxy, for Andersen also asserts that "we cannot expect any theoretical instruction from the Holy Scriptures." We are told that the salvation history to which the Scriptures "witness" is perceived only "when its vicarious character comes to our view." This, we are told, does not allow us to develop "a theory of a special action of God in creation." We

must therefore conclude from Andersen's remarks that, for him, the meaning of Scripture is located in something other than in its literal sense. Andersen continues: "The greatest task for a theology of mission is indeed not to communicate knowledge. . . . The theology of mission . . . at its goal . . . becomes adoration of the Triune God." We must agree, of course,

### SENT SON AND SENT DISCIPLES

"At the Willingen Conference in 1952 the theological presuppositions of the whole missionary movement were clearly and forcefully expressed. This movement, it was affirmed, has its source in the Triune God Himself. He has sent forth one Saviour to seek and save all the lost, one Redeemer who by his death, resurrection, and ascension has accomplished a full and perfect atonement and created in himself one new humanity, the Body of which Christ is the exalted Head. This is followed by a fine statement . . . There is no participation in Christ without participation in His mission to the world. That by which the Church receives its existence is that by which it is also given its world mission. "As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you." (A Statement on the Missionary Calling of the Church, in *Missions Under the Cross*, Norman Goodall, ed. [London: Edinburgh House Press, 1953], pp. 189-90. This statement arose out of the report of Group I on 'The Missionary Obligation of the Church' at Willingen)."—F. W. Dillistone, in *The Theology of the Christian Mission* (Gerald H. Anderson, ed.).

that service to God is ideally also worship of God. But agreement on this point hardly requires the anti-intellectualistic view of divine revelation that undergirds so much of today's ecumenical speculation. The normative role of revealed truths or doctrines is thereby undermined; theology loses rational or intellectual status and becomes voluntaristic and pragmatic. This functional theology centers the Christian revelation,

not in the mainstream of biblical truths and events, but rather in contemporary confrontation or encounter.

In this context the "trinitarian" emphasis, renewed by contemporary theology, becomes either a case of special pleading or a disappointing revival of *modal* trinitarianism. The historic Christian faith is that three divine persons co-exist eternally in the one divine essence. This orthodox view rests not merely on an inference made by the early Christians from their spiritual experience, profound and important as it was, but is drawn also from the authoritative teaching of Jesus and the apostles. Contemporary theologians who rebel against the premise of scripturally revealed truths are left to discriminate spiritual realities only as an inference from their religious experience. But can even regenerate men and women, on the basis of experience alone, distinguish the persons of the trinity? And can one distill simply from a present religious encounter (from God-in-relation-to-me) any sure conclusion about the timeless nature of God (God-in-himself)? Any theology mired in doubts over the permanent nature of ultimate religious reality, and able to issue pronouncements only on a medical bulletin basis, rests on insecure foundations. Does the widening emphasis on a trinitarian manifestation of the Godhead in subjective experience really carry ecumenical theology beyond the metaphysical skepticism of Schleiermacher and the modernists who shied from the discussion of God-in-himself, but emphasized that of God-in-relation-to-man? The basic issue in the Christian doctrine of God is not simply whether there is a plurality of manifestations or modes of the one God, but whether in the one Godhead there eternally exist three divine persons, Father, Son, and Spirit. Any missionary theology which evades this question is only superficially trinitarian.

## CHRISTIANITY AND COMMUNISM

The attitude of this symposium toward communism is especially important, since communism is no mere scheme of social revolution, but makes absolute claims, just as religion, and proclaims the sovereignty of the State.

Frank W. Price, in his chapter "Christian Presuppositions for the Encounter with Communism," makes some pointed observations and criticisms. The twentieth century, he writes, is "the century of Communist power." Not from other ancient faiths, but from communism, which challenges all living religions, Christianity today "finds its most militant opposition." In a sense communism is, in fact, a call to repentance: "We must move . . . to a deeper appreciation of those neg-

lected truths and forgotten emphases of our Judeo-Christian heritage to which Communism is impelling us."

Three emphases in Price's essay, however, call for critical scrutiny: 1. He welcomes "long-awaited social reforms" (without either particularizing these, or distinguishing them from revolutionary social patterns) brought about by communism. 2. He affirms that "God works through Communism" to bring about such changes. He seems untroubled by a direct divine use of atheism to implement the will of God. Despite violence and evils, Price tells us, these developments may be a necessary display of God's creative power.) 3. He appeals to Christian love in the interest of reconciling

Christianity and communism (without requiring Communists to place themselves under the same judgment as Christians). "We must free ourselves from the hard stance of our governments. . . ." "Perhaps in a few decades, or centuries, Christianity and Communism will face one another . . . different faiths and yet not intent each upon the destruction of the other." Beneath these premises, soft toward communism, the evangelical reader will detect a sentimental theory of the love of God ("The cross reveals his infinite love . . .") which deprives the Christian witness of any virile denunciation of atheism and state absolutism.

The idea of the divine inspiration of Karl Marx is explicitly found in Bouquet's essay, as a direct consequence of asserting that the Logos energizes men universally. Astonishing as it seems, Bouquet applies Jesus' promise, that the Spirit would lead his disciples into all truth, not simply to Zarathustra and Buddha, but to "the self-styled atheist Karl Marx himself, so like an Amos *redivivas*." (Marx is said to come "very close to our Lord" in his tenderness for children, whereas his bitter hatred of opponents is ascribed to his "frequent affliction with carbuncles"! Job's carbuncles, we must confess, seem to have been of another variety.)

## BY WAY OF APPRAISAL

What may be said of the overall influence of this symposium on the strategic subject of *the theology of the Christian mission*?

First of all, it relates the Protestant missionary witness normatively to the coming WCC-IMC merger and to the continued dignity of vastly divergent theologies within ecumenical ranks. Despite the asserted rediscovery of a trinitarian *theology of mission*, this claim is vulnerably developed along experiential lines; in several influential essays it shades into contradiction on even such fundamental points as the centrality or even the relevance of Jesus of Nazareth.

Too, the symposium lessons the antithesis between Christianity and non-Christian religions. It minimizes also the loss of the Early Church's either-or-message to the Jew; shrugs at the modern Church's indecision if not softness in the face of communism. Absence of emphases on the sinner's guilt and exposure to penal evils, and (inevitably alongside this) an inadequate message of atonement and salvation and an arbitrary view of divine love that erases the traditional doctrines of hell and final punishment further weaken the volume.

The serious student will surely sense the confused state of contemporary Protestant theology that developed from what, a generation ago, seemed a hopeful re-emphasis on divine confrontation. Characteristic of this so-called "theology of the Word of God" was its refusal to apply the term "Word of God" to Scripture. To reserve the phrase exclusively for Jesus Christ expressly inverted the example of the apostle Paul, who used "Word of God" for Scripture and for the gospel proclamation but not for Christ (cf. Rom. 9:6, 10:7; I Cor. 14:36; II Cor. 2:17, 4:2; Eph. 6:17; Col. 1:25; I Thess. 2:13; I Tim. 4:5; II Tim. 2:9; Titus 2:5). This is the precedent also of Luke-Acts (cf. Luke 3:2, 4:4, 5:1, 8:11, 21; Acts 4:31, 6:2, 7, 8:14, 11:1, 13:7, 44, 19:20). Although both Barth and Brunner dis-

allowed natural theology, and Barth identified the in-breaking "Word of God" only with special revelation, their refusal to identify the Scriptures (in whole or part) with special revelation has now run its costly course. The emphasis of these symposium essays in the main is that *the divine-human encounter is not authentically illuminated only by Semitic or biblical categories of interpretation*. In simple words, confidence in the Hebrew-Christian religion as the one true and saving religion is being shattered; Christianity and the other world religions are viewed (through a renaissance of liberalism) as different in degree rather than in kind. From this development, if from nothing else,

### DREAMS AND SYMBOLS!

"Early Christians said such things as 'God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life,' and 'God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself.' These confessions of faith, evoked by a man who had a place in history and who had an incomparable faith in God, were drawn from the same deep recesses of the human spirit as the ancient Chinese symbolism of the Yin-Yang, the Shiva-Shakti symbolism of Hinduism, the Yab-Yum symbolism of Tibet. All these seem to root in the human dream of a reconciliation, of a return to the source of all. Symbols and their local interpretation may periodically fade away, but the mythic theme goes on being reborn anew in seers and poets and sages."—Floyd H. Ross, in *The Theology of the Christian Mission* (Gerald H. Anderson, ed.), p. 227.

it should be apparent that the loss of the Bible as the inspired Word of God is the prelude also to the loss of Jesus of Nazareth as the incarnate Word of God.

The mediating neo-orthodox theology of Barth and Brunner is now in retreat, and speculative philosophies like those of Bultmann and Tillich have come to the fore in interpreting the significance of the Christian religion. Already these cast their dark shadow over

the entire Christian missionary enterprise. This threat is the more awesome in the twentieth century through two developments: the emergence of a world ecumenical community which intimately links almost half the missionary task force, and the emergence of literature which promotes theological nonconformity and gives world influence to an inclusive tolerance of theological deviations.

In the 1960s, the Christian religion is on the defensive almost everywhere throughout the world. Mis-

sion boards have the right and the duty to define the theology of their outreach in the world. Furthermore Christian believers sacrificially investing in the cause of missions have the right and the duty to know if the message they support shares or does not share the New Testament view of the finality, absoluteness, and uniqueness of Jesus Christ, over against the hopelessness of the pagan religions. If the new symposium clarifies these issues much will be gained. (See editorial, "Missions at Delhi," p. 24). END



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# Christ's Finality: A Lost Vision?

F. CAWLEY

Practically throughout the world the church of Christ is on the defensive. Her heyday seems to have passed and there is deep disquiet in almost every communion naming itself Christian. Yet rightly seen, as Latourette's volumes have made many of us see, such a situation may well mark a fresh advance. Marshall Foch, in the First World War, in one of our darkest hours, said something like this: "My flanks have been driven back; my center has been driven in: we attack!"

### THE MALAISE IN PHILOSOPHY

In my student days I noted in a widely-read volume (one of the celebrated Muirhead Library of Philosophy series) this close of the total argument: "We have therefore the right to hope," and one felt it was so. In after thought, as the world seemed to totter, one recalled the pregnant picture of Hope as a blindfold female figure sitting across the world-sphere with a guitar in her hand, one string alone remaining, and she was playing on that one length of strung wire! Hope! But what if it snapped? There we have the present malaise in modern philosophy, or at least in large stretches of it.

The *doyen* of British philosophy, one assumes, is Bertrand Russell, whose brochure *Why I Am Not a Christian* seems incredible when one recalls his philosophic acumen. A bare reading proclaims how far removed he is from Christian factuality and the faith based thereon. "Hope" seems to have snapped in his early university days. Later on, two excerpts reveal how drastically it had thus suffered: "At last there falls the pitiless dark." In another passage, he urges the stoic-like quality of "an unyielding despair."

As any serious student knows, skepticism is the perennial characteristic of philosophy revealing implicitly the need of a different discipline, faith, if one . . . . .

F. Cawley is Principal-Emeritus of Spurgeon's College, London, which he attended from 1908-12 before going on to University of London for the B.A. and B.D. degrees and to New College, Edinburgh for the Ph.D. degree. Ordained in 1912 by the Baptist Union of Britain and Ireland, he served as Free Church chaplain in World War I and as missionary in India and Trinidad during the ensuing years.

is to abide beyond "unyielding despair." Take, as a starting point, Graecian philosophy. The great figures of the period move us by their incisive thought. Then, at last, there is a crashing, as over a precipice, into skepticism as into nihilism. Reason had shot its bolt, and the thrust for ultimacy met its nemesis. That fallen standard the early Church raised high in its greater faith grounded in revelation. At the Renaissance the two broke asunder, and philosophy moved out on a fresh gallant road, as its great exponents felt, only in Hume to crash again in an even deeper skepticism—deeper since there had been the light of Christ which the Graecians had not known. Kant and his successors gave philosophy a new-born day of reason.

Nevertheless, our own period of philosophy has witnessed to a skepticism passing all calculation—its outreach is beyond any vision of science or of philosophy. It is the skepticism inherent in the Principle of Relativity. There is a change of status, however, for now science is the major discipline, with philosophy its humble assistant. It proclaims a pessimism more shattering than historic man has known. For throughout the history of reason there has been a sort of nascent faith that God exists, and that there is some mode or other by which we may come to know him. That would be a measure of ultimacy not dependent on the worshiper for its reality, yielding true spirituality to him. Not so with Einstein's "relativity." Unless we can encounter one who stands within yet beyond world-phenomena, then ultimacy that out-matches unyielding despair is unattainable. For the doctrine of relativity is that every man is the percipient of his own world, to each man his own world and none other, for he can have one such center only.

Where then can one stress finality? Nowhere, if he is bound by this doctrine. The good man builds his ethicized world; the bad man his evil world; both are abstracting from a whole beyond their grasp. Both "worlds" are "splits" or cross-sections of reality standing in deeper dimensions larger than their vision. Any one may be as good as the other, binding only perhaps as caprice. Here is the malaise in the realm of philosophy. The quest for ultimacy is as far off as ever, and hope is beset by "unyielding despair." Even the

conception of God by so erudite a philosopher as A. N. Whitehead does not break loose from this malaise, since to him "the actuality of God must also be understood as a multiplicity of actual components in process of creation." In answer, one of my former professors responded: "A God who is within the process is no God at all." One recalls the profound parable of our Lord of the two men, one wise, the other foolish. What is clear amid this tangle of thought and counter thought is this: either we are committed to the Christian revelation of "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," or we have no more assurance on ultimate issues than the man who built on sand, and who went down in final disaster.

Final disaster? Yes. That is no mere touch of rhetoric, since the principle of relativity has dealt hard with modern ethics, and has left to every value only an ultimacy measured by individual vision. No common moral yardstick remains; all is according to the individual's stance. Reason, therefore, is suspect; moral reason the same. A paralyzing pessimism, as every deep-seated pessimism is bound to be, is settling over us. All the world over where men seek ultimate standards by which to judge and act, there is no real assurance of final light or worth or validity. The fundamental issue, therefore, lies between the living God of Revelation and the Heraclitean "flux."

#### THE PLIGHT OF EDUCATION

This sense of relativity has had profound effect upon many of our leaders in thought and education. In America, in spite of an apparently religiously determined public opinion, no religious faith permeates academic convictions.

Recently I have been reading a book which has been given this commendation: "A major contribution . . . by one of the most competent specialists working in the field of personality patterns": *The Individual and His Religion*, by Gordon W. Allport, professor of psychology in Harvard University. In a book given to psychological interpretation one does not of course expect a theological treatise. But one is justified to expect in a book which sets out to deal with religion at university levels, some mention at least of the name and influence of those who, in the long years of man's religious quest and life, have influenced the whole world. The author is content however with "subjective religion." In his closing pages on "The Nature of Faith" he states his position: "How the individual justifies his faith is a variable matter, and the certitude he achieves is his alone." This is an honest book, sincere in intention. But of the two authorities who, by every calculus of judgment, have shaped the thought of all our modern civilization, no mention is made. This book is only two-dimensional—it lacks depth and

height: there is no mention of the great prophets of Israel, and the name of Jesus is left out! The inference is that in an individual's quest for finality and self-completion, the Christian faith need not even be considered.

#### A BREATHING SPACE

To many the present moment is a kind of breathing space, itself sharpening the challenge to the world-wide Church of Christ. Over a thousand million now live under the dominance of atheistic communism. In Africa there is a terrific race on the part of Islam to win its emerging peoples to that faith. A growing paganism is operative on all sides. On all final issues the only light one can see is that cast by Christ in the minds of those who see how in his wounded hands he consummates all that man has sought to know of "the purpose, the will, the love and the wrath of the Eternal God," all of which lights up much of the inevitable mystery of God. In Him reason is given its final crown; in him, as revealed in the Scriptures, in nature, in history, and in conscience, faith finds the deepest niche in which to kneel and worship, while Christ redeems that believing heart. The lights that had earlier partly illuminated man's adventures are going out; not a few have already expired. But there is one "Light" which the darkness has never overwhelmed: the light which flames from the face of Jesus Christ.

The poignancy lies just here: the Church has gone out in modern days to evangelize the masses, but she has left undone the evangelization of our foremost teachers and professors. Where at university levels, as was the case with Bertrand Russell, eager young men and women come for ultimate thought, they encounter skepticism. On a day of fierce wind and storm, with a bitter sleet adding to personal discomfort, I witnessed a mass of green sward, only known perhaps in these green islands, slowly blotted out by the feet of hundreds as they came from football galleries at the challenge of Billy Graham to embrace the finality of Christ. Among the first 12 persons was a man whose name was then world-wide as among the foremost adventurous spirits of the day, and with him came his wife. But that is not normal—for the foremost spirits of our day do not come to missions, and how he came I do not know. These men are hand-picked, as one picks rare fruit with careful hand.

At a conference where scholars on Old Testament work in history and language met for a session or two, I heard a lecture on Jewish law by an outstanding Jewish scholar. It happened that he and I sat together at the luncheon that followed. In the course of an easy chat I put forth, with some trepidation, a question that had been on my mind all the morning: "In your judg-

ment, will the time come, near or remote, when the Jew will become a Christian?" His face sharpened at once. "I might answer you fiercely," was his first word, "but I will not.... Rather in the spirit of the sincerity in which you have voiced your question." Then, slowly, "the Jew will become Christian, when the Christian becomes Christian." I was stilled to the core, and I recalled how much of anti-Semitism the Church had caused in the centuries since Christ. Further, he went on, "in this university town I know your churches, and their relative emptiness, and I have not been impressed by what I have seen or heard."

There I heard the modern challenge; what is more,

I *felt* it. The higher seats of our learning must be won for Christ, and the Church must see it as our major battle field. Its cost? "Nothing in my hand I bring. Simply to thy Cross I cling." The heart of Paul, than whom Christ has not won a greater: "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Paul won his earlier day for Christ, for the simple reason that Christ held all there was in Paul, and shone His deathless light through him. That same principle of faith, of life, and of light wins today wherever it may be. Where is it? That is the challenge today. *Our finest must leap to its call!*

END

# The Richness of the Ascension

ROBERT H. LAUER

A strange silence has pervaded the theological world with regard to the Ascension. Few books published in the twentieth century have been energetically concerned with the subject. This is perplexing in view of the fact that all the New Testament theologians either explicitly hold or presuppose belief in the Ascension, and that this belief was universal in the early Church. And it is the more lamentable because of the richness of the doctrine itself. It may be that a pseudo-scientific spirit has quenched its discussion in this century; at any rate, it is to be hoped that the Ascension will once again assume its position of centrality.

## JESUS CHRIST IS LORD

A glance at some of the relevant Scripture passages will reveal something of the richness of the doctrine, and the importance attached to it by the New Testament writers. In Philippians 2:9-11 Paul says, "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name . . . that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." As J. G. Davies has effectively demonstrated, *hupsoo*, which is translated "exalted," must refer to the Ascension; it is never used in the New Testament of the Resurrection. Thus it . . . .

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was by his Ascension that Jesus was marked out to be Lord, as by his Resurrection he was marked out to be Son of God in power (Rom. 1:4). By the Resurrection Jesus is seen to be Victor over death and corruption. By the Ascension he is seen to be Lord, with all power in heaven and earth (Matt. 28:18). As sin was shown to be subject to him by his sinless life; as death was shown to be subject to him by his Resurrection; so all things in heaven and earth are shown to be subject to him by his Ascension. It is not that the Ascension effects his Lordship, any more than the Resurrection effects his victory over death. Rather, the Ascension is the *designation* and the demonstration of his Lordship. It is designation in that it is the reward of the Father for His perfect obedience. In his humanity our Lord was subject to his Father. He came not to do his own will, but rather his meat was "to do the will of him that sent me" (John 4:34). Thus he fulfilled in his person his own saying: "And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted" (Matt. 23:12).

The Ascension is also demonstration, since He ascended of his own will, his own power, and his own right. The two aspects are reflected in the usage of both passive and active verb forms to describe the ascending (as Swete observed, the Ascension is also an assumption). In this active aspect the deity of Christ is implicit. Here is one of the frequent points in the New Testament in which the same work is

ascribed to the Father and the Son. It is true to say *both* that God raised him from the dead and that he raised himself: "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" (John 2:19). It is true in like manner to say *both* that God took him up and that he ascended of his own power. Christ's deity is the explanation of such an assertion.

#### BOTH LORD AND CHRIST

Peter points out the Messianic significance of the Ascension in his sermon on the day of Pentecost. After quoting Psalm 110:1, he says, "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36). Jesus is both Lord and Messiah (a clearer translation for English readers). His ascension is consequently a vital link in a chain of fulfilled prophecy. It is neither a marginal nor an inconsequential doctrine, but it is one strand among many which form the Messianic cord.

It is impossible to ignore the importance of this to the early Church. However much some modern theologians such as Bultmann may speculate about the nonessentiality of the Ascension, such a thought would have been inconceivable to the apostles (even apart from the fact that they had personally witnessed it). For the historicity of the Ascension cannot be questioned without thrusting the whole drama of redemption into the realm of myth. Redemption is a unified whole. It is historical reality. It is the historical fulfillment of the promises of God. There is no Messianic significance in the mythical, at least not to the concrete Hebrew mind. But since the Ascension does have Messianic significance, it has forceful apologetic value in the proclamation of the Gospel to the Jews. And it is for this purpose that Peter uses it at Pentecost.

Jesus Christ, wrote Peter, "is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him" (I Pet. 3:22). From a purely human viewpoint we can imagine the psychological effect upon Peter and all of the apostles of this "going" into heaven. They faced the problem of maturing from a position where they expected the incarnate Christ to do all things *for* them, to a position where they looked to the ascended Christ to do all things *through* them. No doubt their dependence had been intensified by such experiences as their failure to heal the boy with the dumb spirit (Mark 9:14-29). Jesus himself had told them, "without me ye can do nothing" (John 15:5). And would Peter ever forget when his own faith failed him, and he began to sink into the waters upon which he thought to walk to his Lord? Until the very moment of the ascension they hoped that he would "at this time restore again the kingdom of Israel" (Acts 1:6). The Ascension

becomes, therefore, something of a traumatic experience, whereby the disciples are thrust into a new relationship with their Lord. They move into the "time between the times"—the period between Christ's first and second advents; the time we are now passing through.

The scriptural description of Jesus going into heaven is consequently more than a passing remark. The event was branded into the memory of all of the apostles. It was the final *no* to their hopes of an earthly Messianic kingdom. At the same time it was a summons to an "agonizing reappraisal" of the nature of the Messiahship and of their own role in God's reconciliation of the world. How should they now understand the assertion of Jesus that he came to seek and to save that which was lost?—Or the promise that he would be with them always? Suddenly they found themselves in the "fourth dimension" of their relationship with Christ. It took the descent of the Holy Spirit to enable them fully to comprehend the nature of their new existence in Christ, but the Ascension was the initial impact which drove them toward that understanding.

#### HE LED CAPTIVITY CAPTIVE

The quotation of Psalm 68:18 in Ephesians 4:8 portrays a beautiful aspect of the Messianic picture: "He led captivity captive." The Ascension is the triumphal return to heaven of the Son of God. He has conquered and he returns with the captives of war. Sin and death, those enemies of man and God, those tyrants which had enslaved man, are themselves now subjected and held captive to him who openly triumphed over them. The power of sin is broken; it shall not have dominion over the believer; and death "is swallowed up in victory" (I Cor. 15:54), its tyrannical reign ended. Christ the Conqueror rules; and he shall rule "till he hath put all enemies under his feet" (I Cor. 15:25).

Thus the Ascension helped to clarify the nature of the Messiahship to the apostles. They expected a Davidic king, whereas the Crucifixion presented them with a Suffering Servant. Then the Resurrection proclaimed a King after all. The Ascension further clarified the nature of his Kingship. The kingdom of Christ is indeed not of this world. He will reign, but it shall not be simply from an earthly throne. His kingdom will be glorious, but it shall not be the glory of this world. He shall be victorious, but his victories shall not be achieved through the blood and steel of men. The Cross was the decisive and atoning conflict; the Resurrection was the proclamation of triumph; the Ascension was the Conqueror's return with the captives of war which issued in the enthronement of the victorious King!

END

# EUTYCHUS and his kin

## IMAGES

Did you ever feel on the back of your neck the fixed gaze of a store-window model? I never did either, until I listened to Jean Shepard late one night during a hypnotic turnpike drive. Jean Shepard is a radio tragedian who keeps asking religious questions under a thin disguise of banter, nostalgia, and zany boisterousness. "I mean, what's bugging us? What's *really* bugging us? All of us?" he asks, and waits for an answer. Casual shock is one of his specialties, and this program meandered backwards to the point with the planned indirection of a circus clown about to sit on a tack.

Mr. Shepard, it seems, had read about department store dummies in *The New York Times*. Did you know that there are fashions *in* these models as well as *on* them? Each metropolitan store has its type, and the sophisticated restraint common to all Manhattan models contrasts with the exuberance of models in other cities. What is more, these ageless plastic figures go out of date after a few years. It won't do to dress a 1948 model in 1961 clothing. The fit may be perfect, but the face still wears wide lapels.

Since window models are patterned on real people, presumably people go out of date too. What is your type? Late Renaissance? Mid-Victorian?

But the punch line was still to come. What do they do with out-dated figures? The signature music heralding midnight had begun when Mr. Shepard gave the answer from the *Times*. They sell them to the military for use in target practice. The show came to a raucous conclusion as Mr. Shepard shouted firing orders for the execution of the images.

Our image-conscious society feels the impact of those bullets. We may not worship images with pagan directness, but the cult is real. We make images in our likeness, and then make ourselves like them. Merchants find profit in taking our self-image seriously; Hollywood's priesthood knows the sensual rituals of its service. Yet our images are no better than the idols of old. They were lying vanities; our images are empty dummies.

When I reported this promising sermon illustration to Pastor Peterson he

had the last word, as usual. The saddest case, he said, is the intellectual who finds noble tragedy in men's shattered idols. Man's quest for images begins in the ruins of God's image, but it refuses Christ who is the image of the invisible God. "He is the true God, and eternal life. Little children, guard yourselves from idols" (I John 5:20b, 21).

## EUTYCHUS

### THE NEW ENGLISH BIBLE

F. F. Bruce's review of the *New English Bible* (Mar. 13 issue) was much appreciated. However, the realization that the basic aim of the translators was to present a "meaning-for-meaning" rather than a "word-for-word" rendering came as a considerable disappointment to me. . . . I confess some amazement that so little is being said today about the implications of these two views of translation. Ultimately they are profoundly antithetical and give rise to some important questions regarding the essential character and function of Scripture. Under the view that the words of the original autographs are, by the miracle of inspiration, the very words of God, every facet of their structure and relationships becomes a potential source of much enlightenment from God. The aim of translators who hold such a view must be to give to the readers in another language as nearly as possible the same opportunities to examine all these facets and turns of truth as those who read the originals have.

DONALD G. MOSTROM  
The Cornerstone Baptist Church  
Union City, N. J.

In my opinion, the NEB is the most gripping and forceful English translation available. . . . Those whose theology is based on the KJV, or who are otherwise hopelessly wedded to it, should just come out and say so, and not try to imagine that there is something sinister or heretical in each new translation that appears. . . . I thought Bruce's appraisal was very objective and fair. SIDNEY J. SPAIN  
First Christian Church  
Marshall, Tex.

The fact is that this New English New Testament is not a translation at all: it

is nothing but a paraphrase — and a clearly satanic one at that. . . . Among other perversions in the New English New Testament is the monstrous, utterly inexcusable distortion of the Greek text of Matt. 16:18 (O, how deliriously happy Rome will be with *this one!*): The New English reading here is: "You are Peter, the Rock. . . ." What an outrageous interpolation! As every Greek scholar knows well, the words "the rock," after "Peter," do not appear in any Greek manuscript whatever.

Staten Island, N. Y. MEYER MARCUS

Why is it that the NEB translators employ Shakespearean English in the prayers of the New Testament, but nowhere else? Is God especially pleased with the use of a special dialect in conversation with Himself?

Malone College JOSEPH L. GRABILL  
Canton, Ohio

A major objection to the NEB is its translation of Romans 3:30: "He will therefore justify both the circumcised in virtue of their faith, and the uncircumcised through their faith." The Greek does not say "in virtue of their faith"; and surely that is not what the Apostle Paul meant, for he emphasizes throughout his writings that the basis of justification is not our faith but the atoning work of Jesus Christ. Faith is simply the instrument whereby we appropriate the justifying grace of God which has been secured by virtue of Christ's active and passive obedience. Thus, Paul continually speaks of justification as *through faith, by faith, or upon faith*; but never *on account of faith, because of faith, or (the NEB to the contrary notwithstanding) in virtue of faith*. (Incidentally the RSV is open to the same objection at Romans 3:30.)

ROBERT W. ECKARDT  
Emmanuel Orthodox Presbyterian  
Wilmington, Del.

I think it to be evident that no other source has a call to translate the Word of God but the Church of Jesus Christ.

It is therefore not now the time to present a new translation to the people because the Church of Christ is divided into many parts. The nice jar of the

Church of the Reformation has been broken down into many pieces. Which piece is now to be held responsible for this mighty task? I should say: none and all! None, because one piece is not the whole jar; all, because all parts together form that one Church insofar as they wish to adhere to the Reformation standards. How can all those pieces together nominate a joint committee for Bible translation, when their theological convictions differ even on important doctrines? In such translations man will always taste the sediment of this theological discord.

... Translation always implies interpretation. . . . I really cannot see the urgency of a new version; not the least in this ecclesiastical chaos in which we live! . . . One can translate a portion of the Scriptures from a philological point of view alone, but give not a true translation of what is really meant by the writer. I am aware of the difficulties which here arise, but wish only to point out the absolute incompetence for Bible translation at present due to the lack of spiritual life in the true sense of the word. The spirit that speaks from the newer versions is quite another from that of the versions of the "golden age" in spiritual life in the Christian Church. . . .

To what a confusion leads the use of different versions under the Christians. The Lord has said from Israel: "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge" (Hos. 4:6). Is that going to be repeated in the Christian Church today? Let us stay where we are and use the old versions. Let us hope that this will be a means for a united Christendom.

M. KUIPER  
Vanderbijlpark, South Africa

#### THE NEW ISRAEL

When Dr. Aston argues (Mar. 13 issue) that the Servant passages refer to "Jesus Christ, and [him] . . . alone," this reader wishes that he had tried to take into account Romans 9:6-8 and Romans 11, especially verse 5. No doubt the Servant passages refer to Christ principally, but yet as the head of his mystical body, the elect—and thus not to Christ "alone" in a nakedly individualistic sense. The true Israel, the mystical new Israel, also is the Servant, under Christ who is its head. . . . ROY W. BATTENHOUSE  
Indiana University  
Bloomington, Ind.

#### THE ONLY CENSORSHIP

I am writing to correct a misimpression in your item "Eyeing Hollywood" (Feb. 27 issue). Referring to Mr. George

Heimrich, Director of our West Coast Office, you say "some interpreted his remarks as suggestive of boycott or censorship, and criticism was heaped upon him even by members of the Commission. Dr. S. Franklin Mack, Executive Director of the NCC's Broadcasting and Film Commission, dissociated himself from Heimrich's position."

I did not dissociate myself from his criticism of motion picture excesses. I have stated repeatedly that the only censorship which the National Council of Churches can espouse is the censorship exercised by the individual in his rejection and responsible choice of viewing fare.

As a constructive move, our Board of Managers voted to approve the selection of a certain number of films each year for church support at the box office. . . .

S. FRANKLIN MACK  
Executive Director

Broadcasting and Film Commission  
National Council of Churches  
New York, N. Y.

#### KNOX AND JUSTIFICATION

Professor W. Stanford Reid states that in a book of mine on John Knox, *The Thundering Scot*, I "never once mention" justification by faith (Book Reviews, Jan. 30 issue). This is not true. It is mentioned on page 52 of the American edition and on page 43 of the British edition. Moreover, neither edition was published in 1959 as Professor Reid states; one was published in 1957 and the other in 1958. Finally, I am no longer of Bryn Mawr but of the University of Southern California. That all the Professor of History at McGill can find to say about my book consists of three separate factual errors does not diminish my suspicion that he is not very familiar with my writings.

GEDDES MACGREGOR  
Graduate School of Religion      Dean  
University of Southern California  
Los Angeles, Calif.

I would humbly confess to having (a) made a mistake by one year on the date of publication of the American edition of his book, a mistake which was perhaps understandable seeing that the Westminster Press did not place any date of publication on the title page, and (b) failed to discover that last year he left Bryn Mawr and went to the University of Southern California as Dean of the Graduate School of Religion. These are, however, but very minor points which do not affect my basic criticism of his book. In his letter he

objects that I misrepresented him by stating that he had never mentioned the doctrine of justification by faith. In this he was formally right, but in reality and in truth I think my position is correct. The only mention of justification which he himself can point out . . . reads as follows: ". . . From another of his associates at St. Andrews, Henry Balnaves, Knox even received a treatise on the Lutheran doctrine of justification that Balnaves had composed in prison at Rouen, which Knox's galley was then visiting. Knox not only read the treatise but wrote a brief commentary on it."

The point of my comment was that in John Knox's thinking, as shown by his writings, his preaching and all testimonies concerning him, the doctrine of justification by faith alone held a central position. It dominated his life and my feeling is that without an appreciation of this fact one does not understand Knox. To stress his political views as though they were of greater importance than his belief in Christ as his Saviour seems to me to misrepresent Knox and to place a wrong interpretation on both the man and his work.

Finally I do not see what this has to do with my familiarity with Dr. MacGregor's writings.

McGill University      W. STANFORD REID  
Montreal, Que.

#### CREDIT TO WHOM DUE

In compiling the statistics for articles in the missionary issue of *CHRISTIANITY TODAY* (Aug. 1 issue), I neglected to give due credit to the Missionary Research Library.

While not holding the library or its capable director, Dr. Frank W. Price, responsible in any way for the figures, I would like to express my appreciation for the kind of co-operation we received at the hands of this excellent research institution in New York City.

S. E. WIRT

Billy Graham Evangelistic Association  
Minneapolis, Minn.

#### ESSENTIAL ELEMENT

I read with great interest the excellent article in "A Layman and His Faith" (Feb. 27 issue). In my judgment this is the finest short article I have read on the subject of revival. . . . It is a real uplift to see others writing and promoting the most essential element in Christianity . . . genuine revival. This is without doubt the answer to present-day modernism.

HENRY C. JAMES  
Asbury Seminary Bookstore      Manager  
Wilmore, Ky.

## A LAYMAN and his Faith

### ARE YOU BREATHING?

AMONG THE VITAL SIGNS of physical life are the pulse, blood pressure, and respiration.

Prayer is as necessary for spiritual health as breathing is for physical life and just as there are times when the body is almost in a state of suspended animation, when breathing is almost imperceptible, so there are Christians who show little or no evidence of being alive.

Breathing may be absent, shallow, convulsive, or it may be deep, regular, and life sustaining.

The prayer life of a Christian exhibits many of the same characteristics. It may be practically absent, very shallow, or convulsive, that is, resorted to only in case of emergency.

There are other Christians who avail themselves of the privilege of prayer as it is God's will that they should, and with them this exercise is a deep and life-sustaining one.

The *Westminster Shorter Catechism* defines prayer as "an offering up of our desires unto God, for the things agreeable to his will, in the name of Christ, with confession of our sin, and thankful acknowledgment of his mercies."

In a very real sense, next to salvation itself, prayer is the greatest gift God has given to his own. In his infinite wisdom and mercy he sees fit to release divine power as men pray. Prayer may be likened to the light switch on the wall—the current, wiring, and lights may all be in place but only as we throw the switch does the light or other gadgets become operative.

Find a Christian consistent and earnest in his prayer life and you will find an individual who has spiritual power in his life.

The Psalmist wrote: "O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come."

God does hear prayer. There are those who think the main purpose of prayer is to bring our own lives in tune with God's will, and the benefits of prayer are thus restricted to this. That of course is one of the blessings which come from prayer—but it is only one.

In the Bible we find from Genesis to the Revelation that prayer is a divine institution practiced from earliest time. The Bible ends with the prayer, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

The prayer life of our Lord is a constant reminder of the importance of prayer and we ought to follow this example at all cost if we are to live close to him.

Prayer is a two-way communication system, for not only do we talk to God but he talks to us as we wait in his presence.

Down through the centuries devout souls have found that prayer effects changes and brings about results which are otherwise impossible.

One of the preparations for prayer is stillness of the soul. "Be still, and know that I am God," is an admonition too few of us heed. If we were in the presence of an earthly king we would keep silent until spoken to. How much more should we give the King of kings the opportunity to speak to us!

Because we come to God in the name of his Son, we can come with boldness, but never with flippancy. When he tells us to be still and know that he is God there is involved a recognition of his holiness. Subterfuge, pretense, and every vestige of pride are burned away by a sense of the presence of the One who is altogether pure and sovereign.

Prayer not only means stillness in God's presence, it also means waiting, a difficult thing for those of us who are caught up in the whirl of earthly affairs.

But the reward of waiting in God's presence is rich: "they that wait for Jehovah shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint." In prayer we renew our strength, we are enabled to rise above the trials and contingencies of life, we can carry on by his strength, we can walk through the humdrum experiences of the daily grind and not faint by the way.

But prayer is far more than receiving help and strength from a loving heavenly Father. There are many other aspects which must never be forgotten.

Prayer includes confession. "If I regard iniquity in my heart the Lord will not hear me" carries with it a warning. Unconfessed sin is a deadly deterrent to prayer, whether viewed from the standpoint of our petition or God's response.

Another aspect of prayer is restitution. How often we have offended others, even defrauded them. "Therefore if

thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee: leave therefore thy gift before the altar, and go thy way: first be reconciled to thy brother and then come offer thy gift." Some revivals have started in local churches when Christians prayed and were reconciled to fellow Christians through confession and apology.

Prayer also involves *surrender* of our wills to God. In this aspect our Lord set for us the perfect example: "nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." God's children have the right to be importunate, but never the right to be demanding. He who sees all things, for whom the past, the present, and the future are as one, answers our prayers in love and according to his knowledge of what is best.

*Faith* is an essential part of effective prayer. It is based on belief that God's promises are true, that as he has ordained that we should pray to him, and that he will honor his promises to us.

Prayer involves *importunity* in the very truest sense, for importunity is a test of sincerity. There are times when God tests us to see whether we really mean what we pray. Our Lord says: "Ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." How often we ask with a faint heart, seek without expecting to find, knock timidly and then turn back to our own ways.

Prayer should always involve *thanksgiving*. "In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." Do we preface our prayers with thanksgiving and praise? In our social life we try to be appreciative of every favor. Why do we so often fail to thank God who is for us the giver of every perfect gift—our eternal salvation and all of its accompanying blessings?

Finally, prayer is an *attitude*. The Apostle Paul meant a spiritual reality when he said we should pray without ceasing for it is the privilege of a Christian to live in such close contact with God that at all times the way is open into His presence. There are many instances in the Bible where men demonstrated this attitude, not only in praising God but also in asking for wisdom and guidance in sudden emergencies.

God has placed in the hands of his children an unbelievable privilege and power. It is to be used, not neglected. Are you breathing?

L. NELSON BELL

## Basic Christian Doctrines: 8.

## Predestination

For Christian faith, predestination is a vision of the King in the glory of his grace, and a warning against transposing the revelation of the majesty of his mercy into any concatenated scheme of human logic. It proclaims the freeness of God's saving grace in Christ, without making of his will an arbitrary fatalism. The ways of him who predestines are past our tracing out, and the mystery thereof bids us worship where we cannot fathom.

Historically, Augustine of Hippo formulated triple predestination, that is: general predestination or providence which magnifies God's wisdom in governing all things, special predestination or election in which his free grace is seen in the choice of his people, and preterition or reprobation by which he passes by and leaves other sinners to the due desert of their guilt for the manifestation of his power and justice.

In the English Bible, the verb *predestinate* occurs in the eighth of Romans and in the first chapter of Ephesians. The Apostle introduces us to this high theme from the viewpoint of a pastor and in the context of a congregation, rather than as a logician of a philosophical school. In this setting we confront not abstract decrees set and established in the distant past, but the living God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ predestining and gathering to himself his family, adopting them in the Son of his love, and leading them to the praise of the glory of his unspeakable grace. Thus considered, predestination is *personal, Christocentric, and gracious*. This revelation of the living God who personally predestines delivers us from an impersonal petrification of predestination. Its center in Christ gives us the assurance of faith and saves the believer from that deadly labyrinth which swallows up the speculative thinker. And its sheer grace protects from Pelagianism and Pharisaism and fills the heart with gratitude. The rhythm of grace and gratitude, of *God for us* and consequently of *us for God*, is the Christian life.

¶ *Predestination is the personal decision of the God who elects.* The most important thing in the Apostle's statements on predestination in Romans and in Ephesians is that it is God who chooses. The doctrine is not primarily predestina-

tion but God who predestines; the decrees are only after God's decreeing. In Ephesians 1:3, it is God who is showering his blessings upon us. In verse 4, the Greek verb is a middle which indicates God selecting for himself, as an old patriarch might look over his heirs—including his in-laws, adopted children, and grandchildren—and say to them all: You are just the ones mother and I chose for ourselves to make up this our whole family. Since God's choosing was before the foundation of the world, when he alone existed, this can be nothing but God's own act. The fifth verse continues the stress on the decision and action of the divine personality by declaring it to be according to the good pleasure of his own will.

In Romans 8, God is working all things for good to those who are called according to his own purposes. The golden chain which ties together the acts of God from their foundation in his eternal purpose to their consummation in his making us sinners like unto the image of his Son is nothing else than just *God himself*. He loved us, he foreknew us, he predestined us, he called us, he justified us, he glorified us. It is God who is for us. It is God who justifies. In the hands of Paul, as of Augustine, Luther, Calvin, and Edwards, this teaching brings God into the center of the picture—God the Person who wills, who decides, who acts for us, even for our salvation.

A speculative consideration of the eternal decrees may well issue in a mode of thinking that treats them as abstractions apart from God and thereby depersonalizes them. And when either decree or grace is construed without God himself, then the quest for a personal element lights upon man, and what started as God's free grace ends as man's decisive will. Eternal predestination according to decrees established before the foundation of the world may be turned into a form of "orthodox" deism. On the other hand, the sovereignty of God meant for Luther and Calvin God in action here and now, His hand at the helm even in the most violent storm. God has not gone fishing, or golfing, or to an Ethiopian banquet. He is not asleep. He is not otiose. He is *activissimus*. We are not following the Reformers when we

treat God as an absentee deity. Their God was the God of Elijah.

Indeed, the thought of God who personally wills, decides, and acts is close to the heart of the Gospel. It rings in the finite verbs in the Creed. It shines in the great passives by which John Wesley describes the strange warming of his own heart. It is a genuine part of the restudy of the *kerygma* which is blessing the Church today.

Again, this God who personally predestines, acts in his love. In mercy he chose for adoption into his family of children even us rebellious sinners. The man who wrote Romans and Ephesians describes himself as the chief of sinners. In Ephesians 1:5 the choice to be God's children is according to the purpose of His own will, with which the phrase *in love* may well be linked. Or, if that phrase belongs to verse 4, nevertheless in Ephesians 2:4 the riches of God's saving mercy rest upon "his great love wherewith he loved us." In Romans, the verb *predestinate* occurs in the context of God working all things for good, of both the ascended Christ and the Holy Spirit interceding for the saints, and of the purpose of God bringing them into the fellowship and likeness of Jesus Christ. In Ephesians, the God who blesses his people with every spiritual blessing according to his choosing of them before he made the worlds is none other than the *Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*. The God who predestines is the God before whom Jesus lived, in whom he trusted, to whom he prayed 'Abba,' and to whose right hand as Lord and Christ he has been exalted that he may actively accomplish the loving program of eternal election in the history of world affairs and carry the host of his redeemed into the gates of the New Jerusalem.

¶ *Predestination is in Jesus Christ.* According to Romans 8, we are predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son that He may be the firstborn among many brethren, and we know that God is for us by his not withholding his own Son. According to Ephesians 1:3, Christ is the ground and reason of the divine blessing, in 1:4 he is the meritorious cause of our election, in verse 5 through his mediation our adoption is realized, and in verse 6 the grace of God is re-

vealed and bestowed. Salvation is the act of the Holy God doing justice to his own righteousness at any cost to himself. In Christ we have redemption through his blood—the forgiveness of sins through his giving of himself for us.

Augustine turned away from that Neo-Platonic scheme, in which the "lower parts" of God and the "higher parts" of man somehow make contact, to Jesus Christ who as man is the way and as God is the goal of man's pilgrimage. Staupitz told Luther to find himself in the wounds of Christ and then predestination would be to him inexpressibly sweet. To the request of a troubled woman, Luther replied, "Hear the Incarnate Son. He offers thee Himself as Predestination."

Likewise Calvin exhorts men "to flee straight to Christ in whom the salvation is set forth for us which otherwise would have lain hidden in God." That we may call boldly on God as our Father "our beginning is not at all to be made from God's determination concerning us before the creation of the world, but from the revelation of his fatherly love to us in Christ and Christ's daily preaching to us by the Gospel" (*Concensus Genevensis*). Calvin prays that we may be "led to Christ only as the fountain of election," even as truly God he is "the author of election" and as truly man he is "the brightest example of election." And, "it is beyond all controversy, that no man is loved by God but in Christ; He is the Beloved Son in Whom the love of the Father perpetually rests, and then diffuses itself to us so that we are accepted in the Beloved" (*Institutes*, III.xxii.7; III.xxii.1; III.ii.32).

One may compare this with the declarations of neo-orthodoxy in the *Scottish Journal of Theology* (I, pp. 179-181) to the effect that election is *in Christo* in the sense that Christ is the Chooser; that it is *per Christum* in that he is the Chosen One who imparts salvation to those committed to him, the Head who communicates to his members; and that it is *propter Christum* because he takes upon his shoulders our condemnation and bears for us the damnation we deserve.

The neo-orthodox, however, extend this last point further than do the classical Augustinians. Indeed, their view of Christ as taking reprobation for the whole human race would seem to leave no place for any discriminatory choice by God. When all is said and done, there remains the biblical picture of God who chooses, God who elects, God who predestines in Christ and for his sake saves

a great host that no man can number including the last, the least, and the lowest of those who take refuge under his wings; but he does not save those who continue to love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil, nor those for whom the preaching of the Gospel is a savor of death unto death, nor those who despise the riches of his goodness, longsuffering, and forbearance, and fail to consider that the goodness of God leads to repentance. When the cities of his day rejected Jesus, he rejoiced in the Father's sovereign discrimination and continued to sound forth his gracious invitation: "Come unto me, and find rest for your souls."

¶ *Predestination is the election of free grace.* The Lord of the hosts whom he predestines to be his children in Jesus Christ is the God of grace. In Ephesians, predestination is rooted in and magnifies the sheer grace of God.

Ephesians begins as it ends with grace. God has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in Christ. All these flow from his gracious choosing. He predestines according to his loving purpose to the praise of the glory of his grace which he has graciously bestowed upon us in the Beloved, in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of our sins according to the riches of his grace which he has lavished upon us.

There is no place here for human conceits. God did not bestow his electing love upon us before the foundation of the world because of any fancied "infinite value of the human soul." We had no value; indeed, we had no existence. God who alone was before creation is the God of love, of pure grace. The riches of his mercy were bestowed upon us *on account of his great love where-with he loved us*. There was no goodness nor worthiness in us to cause him to choose us. Rather were we hateful and hating one another when the kindness and love of God toward men appeared in Christ. God so loved the world, which slew the babies of Bethlehem and crucified Jesus, that he gave for it his only begotten Son. In Ephesians it is quite definite that God foresaw us and must needs have seen us only in Christ in order to choose such rebellious sinners to be holy and without blame before him in love.

Grace means that God is for us, yes, for us even when we were against him. In sheer grace he chose to create men who were capable of denying the love which bears them. The unfathomable depths of that grace are revealed in God's

giving for this rebellious race the Son of his bosom. It is Christ coming into the world to save sinners, to identify himself with us, to pick up the ticket for our responsibilities, to give himself on the Cross as the ransom price for our deliverance—the propitiation which diverted from us the divine wrath.

Those who come to Christ were already God's sons in his heart while they were yet in themselves enemies. Again and again, that grace is made conspicuous. The risen Christ intervenes to confront his chief opponent and turn him into his trusted friend. Grace is Christ's love for Saul of Tarsus, even when Saul was persecuting him in the treatment he was meting out to Jesus' brethren. Thus grace is prevenient, it comes first, before any response by the sinner. We were dead in trespasses and sins, but God made us alive and raised us up together with Christ. Thus were we born "not of the will of man but of God," born of the Spirit who works faith in us and thereby unites us to Christ in our effectual calling.

Grace is the heart and center of the Gospel. It is the expression of the electing love of God and the parent of faith. It issues in the inward work of the Holy Spirit illuminating our hearts to appropriate the love of God revealed in Christ dying for the ungodly. It is this love reaching out to forgive the guilty. It is not that we loved him but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. It is the forgiveness which justifies the ungodly through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. It is the Father's welcome to the prodigal which gives him a place in the family of God by adoption and by regeneration.

Because it is *sola gratia*, therefore it can only be *sola fide*. Grace leads to faith, to unwavering trust of the heart in Him who has given himself to us as our Father and our Saviour in Jesus Christ. Faith wrought by the grace of the Spirit lays aside trust in self, denies all self-confidence, renounces any thought of merit even in our faith, and entrusts the believer as a helpless, undeserving, ill-deserving, hell-deserving sinner wholly to the goodness, mercy, love, kindness, grace of God revealed in Jesus Christ.

¶ *Bibliography:* Augustine, *Predestination*; J. Calvin, *Institutes*; K. Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, II/2.

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# MISSIONS AT DELHI

What is the mission of the Church? William Carey faced that question in his day. *An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathen* was his written answer. It prefaced another volume, a Living Book opened in India and read of all men. This fall, more than a century and a half later, the question will be put again in India as the Third General Assembly of the World Council of Churches meets at Delhi. Resurgent Hinduism will ask it. Is the mission of the Church alien proselytism or even subversive colonialism? The agenda of the Assembly will also ask it.

The integration of the International Missionary Council into the structure of the WCC is the major business of the joint meeting. The IMC is an organization of missionary societies as well as of church mission boards; the WCC is a "fellowship of churches." If the church council is to absorb the mission council, then the mission of the Church should be plainly set forth.

There will be no lack of material on the question. Many a delegate to Delhi has a stack of books and pamphlets documenting the 50 years of ecumenical discussion that began in the Edinburgh missionary conference of 1910. Somewhere in that stack, you might think, there must be an explanation of what the Church has been doing through the centuries. Are we only now asking what the mission of the Church is?

Christians may confess Christ without being prepared to give a full theology of evangelism. Yet what men think determines what they do. The Church had to be taught by Carey and others that the work of missions is not limited to the time of the apostles; until that misunderstanding was removed, the "Great Century of Missions" could not begin. Sometimes real progress can only be made backwards, by returning to examine what we have taken for granted.

Students of ecumenical discussions find just this merit in the missions conversations of half a century. "It is like a spiral staircase with landings," says one. "Edinburgh, 1910, was at the top, asking about the 'How' of missions and assuming that the Great Commission was the only basis needed. The landings at Jerusalem, 1928; Madras, 1938; and Willingen, 1952, asked the Wherefore, Whence, and Why of missions. Delhi, 1961, brings us out on the main floor, asking, 'What is the mission?'" There is no telling, the same writer cautions us, how many basement levels there

may be in the theological foundations of mission.

If this were the whole picture our only lament might be that we have been so slow of heart to believe. Unfortunately, there is another aspect to ecumenical discussion of the mission of the Church. Its shadow was seen at the Jerusalem meeting of the IMC, and Delhi will not escape it. The inclusivist structure of the ecumenical gatherings has often given the floor to advocates of a humanized, denatured Christianity which does not believe that men are doomed without Christ and saved only through the preaching of the Cross. The problem of the theology of missions became the problem of justifying the Christian mission in fellowship with some men who did not really believe in it.

William Ernest Hocking, the prominent philosopher who was the author of *Re-Thinking Missions*, issued in 1932, and who was present at the Jerusalem meeting, urged that Christian missions make common cause with world religions in the fight against secularism. His blueprint called for inter-faith discussion to supersede preaching. Christianity could be diffused within other religions with "no loss of the historic thread of devotion which unites each to its own origins and inspirations." Such diffusion could be best accomplished by replacing evangelists with social service "ambassadors" who would make common quest with other religions in following the gleam. These ambassadors would be directed by one central agency.

The Jerusalem meeting tried to hedge on the issue of a liberalized Christianity. When it declared "Christ is the message" it was not advancing in the theology of missions but retreating. Archbishop William Temple remarked about his draft of the Jerusalem statement: "I seem to have written what opens the doors for the progressives while perfectly satisfying the conservatives."

At the Madras meeting of the IMC in 1938 Hendrik Kraemer presented his book, *The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World* (1938). Kraemer called the Hocking approach "the suicide of missions," and declared that the uniqueness of the revelation in Jesus Christ created a basic discontinuity between Christian revelation and world religions. Ever since Madras, liberals have been reluctant to carry Hocking's colors. One missions executive says, "It is hard to realize how far the optimistic liberalism of an earlier day, and in

which I once believed, had taken us from the realities of the Christian Gospel. We made our exodus from that Egypt only under storm."

No doubt the storm of war did more to slow the liberal challenge to missions than did Kraemer's defense, but the Dutch scholar had put his finger on the key issue: the nature of Christian revelation. This is still the crux for a theology of missions.

Yet Kraemer's own position, which he called "biblical realism," is not the response of orthodoxy to Hocking's denials. It seeks a dialectical path, neither orthodox nor liberal. Kraemer rejects the claim of historic Christianity that the Bible contains revealed truths. The ideas of Scripture respond to revelation, but they do not contain revelation. "The decisions and pronouncements in the New Testament are, by virtue of the nature of the Christian faith and ethic, never laws for any other generation of Christians" (*op. cit.*, p. 98). Revelation is said to be dialectical because it is by nature inaccessible and remains so even when revealed. God is at once completely revealed in Christ and completely hidden in the man Jesus.

Kraemer's breach between the Gospel and non-Christian religions is also a cleavage between faith and knowledge. Hinduism is not continuous with the Gospel, but neither is Christianity. Both stand under the judgment of God's ineffable revelation. Christianity has the advantage of prolonged subjection to the judgment of the Gospel, but it does not possess it. The church exists in bearing witness to the Gospel. For this reason Kraemer states that the church is mission. Since all men are justified in Christ, the church is not

to be distinguished as a company of the saved, but only in its function of bearing witness to God's judgment and grace upon all men. The church stands in solidarity with the world, witnessing to the world. Kraemer holds that Barth's negative view of religions is not enough. Religions are both rebellion against God and search for God (*Religion and the Christian Faith*, pp. 193, 251, 309).

This reappraisal of the theology of missions is scarcely less radical than Hocking's. Since Madras it has been a major viewpoint in mission conferences, particularly among Continental scholars. In the Willingen meeting of 1952, where the missionary obligation of the Church was the theme, J. C. Hoekendijk of the Netherlands vigorously maintained that the Church was defined by its mission. No conclusion was reached (the prepared report was received, but not adopted). It is the Willingen studies which have led to preparation for a fuller consideration of the theology of missions at Delhi.

In direct preparation for the Third Assembly, a joint study commission of the WCC and the IMC has arranged for two books on the subject. One is a study of the biblical doctrine of the Church's mission to all the nations, written by Dr. Johannes Blauw, of the Netherlands Missionary Council. The other is by D. T. Niles, secretary of the East Asia Christian Conference, and will stress the meaning of the mission of the Church in practice.

To evangelicals the distant Delhi assembly seems to be gathering an enormous organizational potential. Church officials are demanding executive powers for

## THEOLOGICAL FOCUS ON DELHI

In the symposium on *The Theology of the Christian Mission* (Gerald H. Anderson, ed.), Wilhelm Andersen notes two theological problems unresolved by recent discussions of Christian missionary philosophy: 1. the relation between history and salvation history, and 2. the question of eschatology. Debate on eschatology overshadowed the 1954 Evanston Assembly, whereas discussion of salvation history looms in the foreground of the 1961 New Delhi Assembly. Viewed another way, the current problem is the *relation of God's act in creation to God's act in redemption*. A theology of mission grounded in the Trinity and made concrete in Christ faces two dangers: either identifying these divine acts, or *disrelating* them.

In a hurried overview of ecumenical dialogues and study documents, Andersen shows diverse theological traditions at work on this problem. Anglican theologians see the Incarnation as the unifying principle which declares God's solidarity (and the Church's) with the world and with secular history. Yet it is possible for incarnational theology to so one-sidedly expound the *missio Dei* as the meaning and motive of history that it deflates the Cross (as did the social gospel) into a mere human declaration of solidarity with the world. Others

strive to correct this tendency (so Max A. C. Warren) by finding in the Cross the indissoluble connection between salvation history and secular history. Incarnational theology is further criticized by J. C. Hoekendijk in the interest of the eschatological dimension of the kingdom of God, which dimension is said to rule out a distinction between God's act in creation and in redemption; since the Resurrection unveils the Creator reclaiming the world for himself, Hoekendijk tells us, no distinction between history and salvation history is permissible.

But Andersen himself cautions theologians against any such eschatological leveling of Church and world. "The eschatological dimension has two components: The *already* and the *not yet*. The Kingdom of God has come in Christ, but we nevertheless are waiting for its appearance in glory." Andersen hopes for a consolidation of theological emphases. "A healthy theology of mission will not commit the error of isolating the view of the Cross from the Incarnation on one side, nor from the Resurrection on the other side." And "a theology of mission that is determined from the standpoint of the whole Christ does justice to the eschatological dimension."

END

# I BELIEVE . . .

With neither moral direction nor moral stability, modern post-Christian man is in sad straits indeed.

Some confused leaders even commend thievery of land and piracy at sea as proper manifestations of man's aspirations for freedom. Any purchase of freedom by injustice, however, is a bad bargain that carries hidden future charges.

Contemporary world peace propagandists encourage us to sacrifice something precious—even facets of our freedom, if necessary—for the sake of human survival. But peace bought in the bondage-mart, and flying the flag of justice only at half-mast, is surely a prelude to totalitarianism or to tyranny. Such peace is no triumph for human dignity and destiny. The surest way for the West to seal up the era between the Protestant Reformation and the Russian Revolution is to purchase peace from dictators who whittle away our liberties.

*Carl F. H. Henry*

the new Commission of World Mission and Evangelism to be set up.

The theological challenge of Delhi may prove equally great. What will the Assembly say about that ecumenical mission of Christ's Church for which it claims to speak? When it tells of Christ the Light of the world, will it use the figure to justify the old liberal "ashram" approach in which the light of the Gospel blends with the festival of lights in Hinduism? Or will it utter a dialectical "yes" and "no" upon both the Vedas and the Old Testament?

What will be said, after decades of discussion, concerning the biblical basis of missions? Misgiving has already been registered in the WCC about Dr. Blaauw's assignment. "We should ask what the Word of God says to us about mission instead of seeking for a biblical basis of mission" (Victor E. W. Hayward, "The Word of God and the Church's Missionary Obedience," in *Bulletin*, WCC Division of Studies, Vol. VI, No. 2, p. 12). That distinction would mystify many a village pastor in the younger churches. Delhi should be pressed to speak plainly about the Bible. Is a theology of missions to be based on the conviction that Jesus never spoke the Great Commission—"a word spoken in the spirit of the Lord rather than . . . a word of the Lord himself" (Ernst Lohmeyer, "All Power Is Given Unto Me" in Schmauch, *In Memoriam Ernst Lohmeyer*, Stuttgart, 1951, p. 126)—indeed, that he never spoke that Commission because the Resurrection is a myth?

In a biblical theology of missions, Jesus' own teaching must have a central place. The new debates about the Jesus of history cannot be quietly shelved. An appeal to the Christ of faith will not suffice. Was Jesus mistaken about his Kingdom? Would he have been astonished by the Great Commission? The promises of the Old Testament are also decisive for the mission of the Church. Peter preached from Joel on Pentecost; at the Jerusalem council attended by the apostles, James appealed to the book of Amos to settle the scope of the Church's mission. No theology of missions can acquiesce in the negative conclusions of the critics concerning the Scriptures. German scholars may declare that a saying of Jesus is not genuine, then urge its "eminently positive meaning." Such talk may have its appeal—to Hindus. But it cannot sustain the Christian Church.

The theology of missions must be an evangelical theology, without equivocation. Discussion at Delhi will touch the roots of the Gospel. What is the message? The existential "Kerygma" fancied by the critics? Or the full proclamation, instruction, and comfort of the whole Bible? Are we to tell men that they are already justified in God's Act, or that except they repent they shall surely perish? What is the Church? That functional community in solidarity with the world which is happily aware that all men are under God's final yes? Or the chosen people of God, united to Christ, born of the Spirit?

It is vain to drive the question of the Church's mission to its foundations unless there is the discernment and courage to distinguish the Rock of Foundation from the quicksands of unbelief.

END

## PUBLISH GLAD TIDINGS IN A SPACE SHIP? WHY NOT?

The space age left the comic strips and became an imponderable reality when Major Gagarin rode the nose cone of a space ship around the earth and returned to the soil of the U.S.S.R. Scientific and technical aspects of the achievement are remarkable. Political implications are less than sanguine.

For Christians the orbiting astronaut has a message of both faith and works. He reminds us that he is not the first man into space. On Ascension Day (May 11) we observe the ascending of Jesus Christ to the right hand of the Father. As Lord of time and space, Christ rose unconfined by the limitations that beset Christian and Marxist alike.

But this new "breakthrough" also reminds us that whoever or whatever may be out there in space needs to know that "all things were made through him" (John 1:2). A vast new evangelistic possibility awaits the Church in the service of the Saviour. Not Gideons, but Gideons are being called for. Who answers?

## THE UNCOMPLETED TASK:

## What of the Missionary Imperative?

Jesus' words about the keys of the Kingdom have had an enormous influence upon the entire history of the Christian Church. In a real sense Christendom today is divided into two major branches—Romanism and Protestantism—by divergent interpretations of Matthew 16:18, 19: "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church. . . . And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

## Views of this Passage

The extravagant claims of the Roman Catholic church are based ultimately upon these two verses, and without them the whole dubious structure of Rome crumbles to dust. According to that view, Peter is said to be the personal possessor of the keys whereby men gain or are refused access to heaven. This has been taught so assiduously and for so long that even we ourselves sometimes refer to heaven as a place guarded by pearly gates, with Peter as the gate-keeper carrying the keys in his hands. This is a distinctly Roman Catholic picture. Moreover, the Roman church insists that this divine prerogative of Heavenly Gatekeeper has been transmitted to all those whom they call the "successors of Peter"—the bishops of Rome, the popes.

All of this we roundly reject, "for there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (I Tim. 2:5). However much our Lord may have loved and honored the big fisherman, Simon Peter, Jesus certainly did not abdicate his own prerogatives as only mediator and assign them to another.

What then may a conscientious Protestant make of these verses which have been so troublesome within the family of Christians? For one thing, Protestants are in general agreement that these words were not intended for Peter alone. Rather, Peter was the spokesman for the whole group of disciples, and Jesus answered the whole group through him. When Jesus asked the disciples, "Whom say ye that I am?" (Matt. 16:15), it was Peter who spoke in answer, but he

spoke for the whole group: "We believe you are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

Jesus' response to this, though addressed to Peter, was directed to the whole company who believed as Peter did. The keys of the Kingdom were delivered into the hands of the whole band of disciples. Whatever they bound on earth would be bound in heaven, and whatever they loosed on earth would be loosed in heaven.

Not only so, but what Jesus said to Peter and the other disciples, he also says to you and to me: "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

What did Jesus mean when he committed to you and to me the keys of the Kingdom? There is some difference of opinion among Protestants. One popular and rather modern interpretation makes much of the fact that certain rabbis in Jesus' day sometimes used the words "binding" and "loosing" in the sense of "forbidding" and "permitting." Thus, it is assumed, what Jesus was saying to his disciples in essence was this: "I now bestow upon you the authority of officially forbidding or permitting what men shall believe and practice in the church." These interpreters tell us that Jesus is talking here about the ecclesiastical prerogatives of church leaders in deciding matters of faith and life (*The Interpreter's Bible*, vol. 7, *loc. cit.*; *The Abingdon Bible Commentary*, *loc. cit.*; *The Moffatt New Testament Commentary*; and others).

This popular and recent interpretation, however, seems strangely blind to the fact that what Jesus really said was, "Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Surely God in his heaven is not bound by the decisions of church courts, or of ministers, or of church leaders.

Far sounder is the classical Reformed view, enunciated four centuries ago by John Calvin, and expressed more recently and in popular form by Elton

Trueblood in *The Yoke of Christ* (Harper, 1958). According to Calvin and the bulk of the Reformed tradition, the "keys of the kingdom" do not refer to special prerogatives at all. They refer instead to special responsibility. Our Lord has not abandoned his own prerogatives and given them over to Peter, or to you and me, or to the highest courts of the church. Jesus is not speaking here of ministerial prerogative, but of Christian responsibility.

The awesome responsibility of loosing the chains that bind all mankind has been committed into our hands—your hands and mine. Whatever, by God's grace, we are enabled to loose on this earth, will be set free forevermore. And whatever, by our own indolence and selfishness and coldness of heart, we never get around to unloosing, shall never be loosed—either in this life or the next, either in time or eternity.

## Classical Reformed View

What is this key, committed into our hands, that unlocks the chains which bind men? It is none other than the Good News about Jesus. In all the history of man, no other key has ever been able to unshackle the chains that bind men in their ignorance, sin, and despair.

Let the Bible speak for itself. In the passage before us, Jesus turned to the disciples and said, "Whom do you say that I am?" They answered, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Note well that answer, for it is the turning point of the whole passage. Everything else that Jesus says here is based upon it.

In reply to that Great Confession—"thou art the Christ the Son of the living God"—Jesus said three things. First, he said, "On the rock of this kind of a profession I am going to build my church. Not on the rock of any man or organization or material power . . . but on the rock of the profession 'Thou art the Christ the Son of the living God' I will build my Church. And nothing in all creation, not even the defenses of hell itself, will be able to stand up against it."

The second thing that Jesus said, in response to the disciples' Great Confession, was this: "Into your hands who make such a profession, I commit the

testimony to what you have affirmed—the testimony which has power to bind and to loose, both here and hereafter, both now and forevermore. The keys of the kingdom I place in your hands."

The third thing that Jesus said in response to their Great Confession was, "Now I can begin to show you that the Son of Man must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day." He began to explain to them what it would cost him to provide this deliverance.

The key, then, which opens the Kingdom to men, and which has been placed in our hands, is composed of two parts: a testimony of *who Jesus is*—"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God"—and a telling of *what he has done for us* in his suffering, death, and resurrection. This is the key placed in our hands, the key which unlocks the chains that bind.

The King has come! He has done battle with the enemy, and has won! The New Age has begun. Jesus now reigns, whether men acknowledge that reign or not. This is the testimony that liberates men from the chains that bind. This is the testimony that reconciles man to God, and man with man. This is the testimony that saves. All over the world today, blighted hearts and darkened minds are being lighted with faith and hope and truth through this simple testimony of who Jesus is and what God has done in him. This is the Good News! It is the key to the kingdom of Heaven.

Moreover, this key is the only key. There is no way of salvation other than telling and hearing what God has done for us in Jesus. There is no other way, no other key.

A heathen's sincerity in the practice of his pagan religion is no alternative justification before God. A pagan's faithful performance of the best that he knows is no substitute key to the Kingdom. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me" (John 14:6). As the Apostle Peter put it, "Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

The Gospel of what God has done in Jesus is the only key into the kingdom of God's love and peace and presence. This key has been delivered into your hands and mine. Whatever we leave bound on this earth by not applying this key, will remain bound in heaven.

Whatever is loosed by this key that is in our hand, will be loosed both by time and for eternity.

#### *The Missionary Imperative*

The application should be plain. You and I are under a missionary imperative, every one of us, to go into all the world and make known the Good News to every creature. This ought to be plain enough from the Great Commission.

Somehow there has grown up a way of thinking among us that cuts the nerve of the missionary imperative. Somehow men do not seem as sure as once they were that the eternal destiny of countless souls rests squarely upon you and me, in our faithful telling of what God has done for us in Jesus. Somehow we do not seem to be shaken any more by the awesome imperative that whatsoever we bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatsoever we loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. Somehow we seem no longer moved by familiar lines that we often sing:

Behold how many thousands still are lying  
Bound in the darksome prison house of sin,  
With none to tell them of the Saviour's dying,  
Or of the life he died for them to win.

Perhaps we have heard so often of the love of God—the great and gracious love of God—that we find it strangely difficult to think of thousands of men and women perishing because someone has never told them what God has done for them in Jesus. But they *are* perishing! Look about the world and see. The marks of their perishing are plain for all to see—they are written on the front pages of our newspapers. Moreover, they will continue to perish until you and I, and the whole Christian Church rise up and tell in every place what great things God has done for them.

Where did the notion come from that there is some kind of "second chance"? Where did we find the idea that the pagan is judged differently than we, on the basis of his pagan sincerity? Certainly we did not find this in the Bible. On the contrary, it is a product of freelance sentimental thinking, dreamed up, it may well be, in order to salve our restless consciences in the face of our unwillingness to yield to the imperative of the Great Commission which lies upon every one of us.

Yet, what about the love of God? Can God really love these who have never

heard, if he allows them to perish in their ignorance? Yes God loves them! He loves them enough to send his only begotten Son into the world to die for them. Indeed, our Lord has called you and me to be Christians, not because he loves us more than he loves them. He has called you and me precisely because he loves *them*, in order that we might carry to them the Good News of what God has done for them. He has not called us as his pets to special privilege. He has called us to special service, as his messengers.

The missionary imperative is not a select and highly specialized calling that rests only on a few. The missionary imperative rests equally upon every man, woman, and young person whom Christ has redeemed. Robert E. Speer, the great missionary statesman, has written a remarkable pamphlet titled, "What Constitutes a Missionary Call?" While the pamphlet runs to some thirty pages, this is the substance of it: We all stand under the missionary imperative—the Great Commission. "Go ye," Jesus said. "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). This was spoken to the entire band of disciples, both then and now. We are all called, every Christian among us. We need no strange and special revelation in order to fall under this general Christian responsibility. On the contrary, we need a special revelation to show that we are exempt from the claims of the Great Commission. It is not a special justification to go that we need—we have our Commission. We need a special justification if we do not go—one which we can present to the Saviour when we meet him face to face.

Every one among us is called to missions—specifically and personally. The call of God is upon us! Who will obey? The trumpet call of the Kingdom has sounded! Who will rally to the King's service?

He comes again: O Zion, ere thou meet him,  
Make known to every heart his saving grace;  
Let none whom he hath ransomed fail to greet him,  
Through thy neglect, unfit to see his face.

Publish glad tidings, tidings of peace,  
Tidings of Jesus, redemption and release.

DAVID W. A. TAYLOR  
Central Presbyterian Church  
Bristol, Virginia

# NAE Urged to Present More Positive Stance

Evangelical leaders speaking at the 19th annual convention of the National Association of Evangelicals, held in Grand Rapids April 10-14, conveyed the feeling that the NAE has come of age and that the time is opportune for the organization to present a positive front on church and world issues, rather than to be known in the public mind as merely an anti-Liberal, anti-Catholic, and anti-Communist movement.

Dr. Carl F. H. Henry, editor of *CHRISTIANITY TODAY*, struck the keynote when he said the evangelical movement "must face the theological, social, political, and economic trends before us, rather than seeming to be resigned forever merely to react to the world's initiative" in these areas. And, speaking on "theological trends facing the evangelicals today," he challenged the NAE to promote a "comprehensive evangelical exposition of three great concerns—the problem of religious authority, the mission of the Church, and the nature of the Church."

The twentieth-century battle against the enemies of the Christian faith will either be won or lost at the level of the local churches, the convention was warned by Dr. Henry Bast of Western Theological Seminary.

"There must be a basic return to an emphasis of Christian fundamentals in the local churches," Dr. Bast said. "This means the emphasis must be placed on Gospel preaching, the sincere proclamation of the Word of God." He said that too many church leaders of the day are "running around with a great deal of concern about the church in general, overlooking the church in particular."

Liberal leaders in the modern Protestant ecumenical movement have surrendered and sacrificed scholarship and objectivity in their effort to build one great world church, said Dr. George L. Ford, NAE executive director.

"It is going to be up to evangelical scholarship to return objectivity to the study of theological matters," he said. "There is a demand from the grass roots for clearly stated, easily understood treatments of the matters of authority, the nature of the church, the place of the Word of God and the mission of the church in today's world. There is a concern on the part of evangelical scholars for the communication of their beliefs and convictions. I am recommending to the Board of Administration of the NAE that we do something about this, beginning with the setting up of a study commission on theological trends."

## ACTIONS OF THE CONVENTION

Delegates to the National Association of Evangelicals Convention adopted a resolution urging the organization to make a positive approach to the problem of Communism with a "dynamic presentation of the Gospel rather than engage in the investigation and exposure of individual Communists." Support was given governmental investigatory functions as necessary for national security.

Other resolutions endorsed (1) tax exemption for church and institutional activities provided such were not of a secular enterprise nature, (2) an appeal to the National Association

of Broadcasters to clean up TV films, and (3) church efforts to accelerate educational information on the evils of liquor traffic.

The convention created a new NAE organization post, that of director of information. W. Stanley Mooneyham was appointed to the post. Mooneyham is editor of *United Evangelical Action*, the NAE magazine, and will henceforth serve in a dual capacity.

Building of a new headquarters building in Wheaton, Illinois, at a cost of \$100,000 was approved. It is to be ready for use early in 1962.

## CHRISTIANITY TODAY NEWS

The United States and the West cannot snatch the initiative from Communists surging through a large part of the world without developing a positive, aggressive diplomacy, with firmness backed up by military strength and force, Dr. Harold John Ockenga of Boston told a public rally at the convention.

Dr. Ockenga, pastor of Park Street (Congregational) Church in Boston, said that much of the Communist gains must be attributed to the vacillation and weakness of the free world.

The modern crisis demands a return to the Word of God, said the Rev. Thomas F. Zimmerman of Springfield, Missouri, NAE president. "It is not surprising that out of the deep pall of skepticism hanging over the heads of all who do not possess the authority of divine revelation has come a willingness to listen for answers which make sense in a scientific age, in a time of indecision, and an era of cold war," he said.

"The times in which we live do demand a return to the Word of God," he said. "Faith has been undermined because the authority of the Word of God has been questioned. What has been a growing concern with the leadership of the NAE has now become a gripping conviction — there must be a special emphasis on the study of the Word of God in the churches of America. The Bible must be returned to the heart of our churches and the nation."

Among the statements made by the convention was a declaration including

the following affirmations of delegates:

"We deplore the present national apathy in spiritual life, confusion in theology, rampant materialism in society, and laxity in morals. Recognizing the only remedy to be a spiritual awakening, we urge the spread of the Gospel with renewed effort and intensified vigor in accordance with our Lord's command.

"We adhere to the historic American principle of separation of church and state, thereby to preserve liberty and freedom. We are unalterably opposed to a totalitarian state whether materialistic or religious in its tyranny."

The address by Henry chided the NAE for failing to concern itself sufficiently with contemporary theological issues and for forfeiting the initiative in Christian social ethics. Excerpts:

"The National Association of Evangelicals has labored through many years with many fine practical achievements to its credit. But it seems to me to have fallen short especially in the intellectual arena whose neglect not only leaves any agency powerless against its competitors but breeds internal inconsistency and inconstancy which invite deterioration of any principled fellowship. That is why theological revival sooner or later must enliven NAE or theological decline will stifle it."

"Let me speak now of three important trends in theology. Each is a contemporary issue which stared NAE in the face already at the time of its founding many years ago, and which even provoked its

organization in a measure, and yet the movement as such has not yet elaborated a comprehensive evangelical exposition and interpretation of these great concerns. They are: the problem of religious authority; the mission of the Church; and the nature of the Church. There is little point in comforting ourselves here that the inclusive ecumenical movements gather all divergent viewpoints, wheat and chaff alike, into one theological granary, welcoming each as a "witness" to the truth (irrespective of conflicts and contradictions), and then settling for an existential togetherness as the enduring common core of Christian faith. A movement may deplore the skeptical handling of truth, and even the deceitful manipulation of doctrine, as long as it has life and breath, but until it spells out an answer in terms of theological structure—and not simply in terms of evangelistic energy and ecclesiastical goodwill—the issues are not really faced in depth.

"Has there come out of the theological reservoirs of NAE as a movement any authoritative exposition of the form and content of divine revelation? Of the task of the Church? Of the mission of the Church? If these are the central concerns, have the movement's ministers (not simply the theologians) been caught up by these issues, or have they been left to the theologians, and at that to theologians who are not really at this stage 'NAE theologians' after all? Is theology something that belongs off center, and only on the periphery of a movement like this, even if kept within shouting distance so that now and then it can be summoned to help plaster some sagging nontheological foundations?

"Why is it that, although more than half the foreign missions task force stands consciously outside the ecumenical movement, and although the integration of IMC and WCC is scheduled in New Delhi in November, the production of a comprehensive symposium on the theology of the Christian mission has been left to inclusive theological agencies, which will force even your missionary training centers to rely on their textbooks as the price of this neglect? Why is it, with the United States undergoing a social revolution involving greater reliance on centralized government and narrowing opportunities for voluntarism, NAE has been content mainly to condemn the quasi-socialist philosophy often expressed in Federal and National Council actions, but has bequeathed to ecumenical forces the opportunity of elaborating Christian social ethics from an objectionable point of view?" P. de V.

## PROTESTANT PANORAMA

- A plane crash claimed the lives of three clergymen of the Church of God last month. Found dead in the wreckage of their single-engine private plane near Woodland, Mississippi, were the Rev. Robert Mapes of Fort Wayne, Indiana, the Rev. Charles C. Kirby, of Troy, Michigan, and the Rev. M. B. Ellis of Detroit. They reportedly had been flying through a thunderstorm to Paragould, Arkansas, after a conference at Ellinsville, Mississippi.
- A Presbyterian minister, his wife, and their two children were killed this month when their single-engine plane crashed near Summersville, West Virginia. Killed were the Rev. Francis Barr Allan, 33, minister of the State Street Presbyterian Church in Schenectady, New York; his 30-year-old wife, Laurice; a 13-year-old daughter, and a 10-year-old son. The family was returning home following a visit to the minister's mother in Kentucky.
- Merger proponents claimed an interim victory this month in litigation involving the Congregational Christian General Council and the Evangelical and Reformed Church. Federal Judge Edward J. Dimock refused a request by merger opponents to dismiss a "trial within a trial" being held to determine whether issues raised in a suit filed by the plaintiffs in 1957 have been already decided by a 1953 New York State Court of Appeals decision.
- A new seminary, to be known as the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, will be formed through consolidation of four schools which represent four merging church bodies. Exact location is not yet determined, but classes may begin by January, 1963, according to spokesmen.
- The Lake Drive Baptist Church of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, will soon begin construction of a new \$125,000 edifice following a five-year legal battle over zoning restrictions. The state supreme court last month reversed a ruling of a Milwaukee circuit court which upheld a zoning ordinance prohibiting construction of the church.
- *China Bulletin*, a National Council of Churches publication devoted to religious news from behind the Bamboo Curtain, will henceforth appear less frequently because of a lack of information. The March 27 issue announced, "Due to the smaller amount of concrete news about the churches of China which is now reaching us, it has been decided to make the *China Bulletin* a monthly instead of a bi-weekly publication, beginning with April." Edited by Francis P. Jones, the publication is issued by the Far Eastern Office of the NCC's Division of Foreign Missions.
- Presbyterian missionaries were reoccupying certain stations in the Congo last month. Work was continuing in safety in Kasai Province and in the cities of Leopoldville and Elizabethville, according to reports received by the Board of World Missions of the Presbyterian Church, U. S.
- Lilly Endowment, Inc., is advancing \$30,000 to Princeton Theological Seminary for preparation of a new bibliography of New Testament studies. Seminary President James I. McCord said the grant will make possible the early publication of the first such study in a century. Director of the project will be Dr. Otto A. Piper, professor of New Testament literature and exegesis.
- World Vision President Bob Pierce was a surprise guest on Ralph Edwards' "This Is Your Life" television program this month. The well-known missionary evangelist is making final preparations for his Tokyo crusade, which begins May 6.
- Eleven of the 14 Lutheran bodies in Japan will merge at a constituting convention scheduled for October 31, 1962. Fixing of the date climaxes nine years of merger discussions.
- George Fox College, Quaker liberal arts institution in Newberg, Oregon, plans a major development program aimed at accommodating at least twice as many students. First of the new facilities will be a women's dormitory and 12 apartments for married students.

## Impact of Revival

A religious revival that would demonstrate its impact on society by curbing social evils was urged by the manager of the National Holiness Association's 93rd annual convention in Chicago this month.

Despite steady increases in church membership rolls, Dr. Paul L. Kindschi asserted: "I don't feel that a real, deep revival has hit American society."

"If a religious revival really were upon us," he said, "it would show up statistically in such places as FBI reports on crime. But crime keeps increasing. This is a disturbing thing."

The NHA is a coordinating agency for 16 religious bodies aimed at promoting the Wesleyan evangelical tradition "on the infilling of the Holy Spirit as a work of grace experienced subsequent to conversion." Some 1,500,000 church members are represented in its constituent bodies, which include the Wesleyan Methodist, Free Methodist, Church of the Nazarene, Pilgrim Holiness, United Missionary and Brethren in Christ denominations, as well as the Salvation Army and several Quaker conferences.

## Welcome Home

A "welcome home" testimonial dinner for Ezra Taft Benson highlighted the 131st annual General Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormon) in Salt Lake City this month.

Benson, a member of the Church's Council of 12 Apostles, had been in Washington for the last eight years serving as Secretary of Agriculture in the cabinet of former President Eisenhower.

Increased youth participation was hailed as "the most encouraging progress" of the church during the last year in a message by Dr. David O. McKay, president. McKay addressed a capacity audience of 6,000 at Mormon Tabernacle. The message was relayed via loudspeaker to thousands of others standing outside in Temple Square and was carried over television and radio.

## Leaving the WCC

The Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church of the Transvaal—biggest of the Dutch Reformed bodies in South Africa—voted in Pretoria this month to resign from the World Council of Churches.

The decision came within three weeks of similar action by the small Dutch Reformed Church of Africa. Both churches were represented at a meeting of churchmen held at Johannesburg last

December under the World Council of Churches' auspices to discuss the South African government's apartheid policies.

The synod's decision left only the Dutch Reformed Church of the Cape Province representing the World Council in South Africa, and there was strong feeling it also would leave the council.

## The Kennedy Advantage

"It would appear that the so-called religious issue was an advantage to President Kennedy" in the 1960 election, Republican National Committee researchers concluded this month.

Among identifiable groups, a GOP report said, "the most obvious and dramatic switch found, when the returns of 1960 are compared with those of 1952 or 1956, is the switch among Catholic voters."

## From Loans to Grants

The Roman Catholic hierarchy apparently will press for direct federal grants for its schools, according to remarks made by Msgr. Frederick G. Hochwalt at the annual convention of the National Catholic Educational Association in Atlantic City this month. Hochwalt, director of the department of education of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, limited his initial testimony to an appeal for low-cost, long-term loans. Since then, an administrative legal brief has been made public which holds such loans unconstitutional in the same way as are direct grants.

## Sequel on the Sand

A dramatic sequel to Billy Graham's Florida evangelistic crusade saw some 10,000 college students crowd a Fort Lauderdale beach this month to hear him preach the Gospel.

A virtual afterthought, the rally was hastily arranged after an urgent plea reached Graham from the mayor of Fort Lauderdale, Edward Johns. It was the only meeting of the entire three-month campaign to be held directly on an ocean beach.

The audience was made up of many of the same students who had to be held at bay for days by local police. Hundreds were arrested for disturbances ranging from drunkenness to inciting to riot. They were part of a large number of college students spending their spring vacations at Florida beaches, a practice which is growing each year and which seems to be developing into a notorious American institution.

The students maintained quiet and order throughout Graham's 40-minute sermon.

"Give yourselves to Christ," Graham pleaded, "and it will have been worth coming to Fort Lauderdale to meet him."

The customary invitation for decisions was not given because of the lack of counselling facilities.

Graham is seeking a few weeks' rest before undertaking his gigantic North of England Crusade in Manchester late in May.

## HOW MUCH DO MINISTERS READ?

Nearly 50 per cent of clergymen responding to a *CHRISTIANITY TODAY* sample survey indicate they are unable to read more than 10 books a year.

A random sampling of 100 Protestant ministers in large as well as small denominations were asked:

"How many books have you read thoroughly, cover to cover, within the past year?"

Out of the first 43 who responded, 23 said "more than 10" and 20 said "less than 10," including 2 who declared that they had not read any books during the past 12 months.

In reply to a question as to how often they used their local public library, 16 said "rarely if ever" and 21 said "occasionally." Only six claimed to use their local libraries regularly.

The ministers were also asked to make suggestions about public

libraries. A number urged the addition of more books on religious topics.

"Does your local public library stock the right kind of books for you as a minister?"

Twenty of the responders (nearly 50 per cent), said no. Only 10 said yes, while another 13 were uncertain.

Several of the ministers polled wrote in suggestions to the effect that librarians ought to keep closer liaison with ministers as a means of learning which books to order.

Several others urged public libraries to promote their services to a larger degree and to undertake more effective education to get people to read.

All but two of the responding ministers declared that they thought *CHRISTIANITY TODAY* belonged in their public libraries.

The poll was taken in observance of National Library Week, April 16-22.

## 20 Years of USO

Two questions work on the minds of servicemen, according to Selective Service Director Lewis B. Hershey:

"Does anybody know I'm here? Does anybody give a damn?"

"The USO," says Hershey, "is proof to them that somebody back home does give a damn."

United Service Organizations, Inc., a federation of six volunteer agencies, claims to aim at meeting "the spiritual, religious, social, recreational, welfare and educational needs of those in the armed forces." At times the achievements are, like the aforementioned description, crude.

Now embarking on its third decade, having been conceived early in 1941 with the great buildup of U. S. military forces, the USO displayed impressive statistical wares last month at an annual meeting of its 600-member National Council advisory board of prominent citizens in Washington's Mayflower Hotel.

Played down was the basic religious character of the USO evident from the fact that:

—Five of the six agencies which go to make it up are religious groups, Young Men's Christian Associations, National Catholic Community Service, National Jewish Welfare Board, Young Women's Christian Association, and the Salvation Army (the other agency is National Travelers Aid Association);

—By definition it proposes to serve "spiritual and religious" needs;

—It looks to churches for financial help.

Core of USO activity lies with (1) some 200 "clubs" in the United States and abroad—centers where servicemen can eat, dance, read, write, sleep, play, and obtain counsel—and (2) with touring shows featuring singers, dancers, comedians, and athletes.

The club program has wide endorsement except for a few cases where Salvation Army officers have objected to sponsorship of dances. The big discontent with USO activity has always focused upon the touring shows' persistence in smutty performances. In recent years public indifference has allowed off-color shows to continue.

Most chaplains now seem unconcerned, perhaps on grounds that servicemen's morals are by and large even lower than the show standards. A few chaplains, however, still speak angrily of some USO entertainment, and charge that it works at cross-purposes with what chaplains are trying to do. They sense

that the entertainers consider risque elements necessary to their routine.

Says one Army chaplain:

"The people responsible for producing and programming these shows remind me of my kid-brother who always knew how much deviltry he could raise around the house without getting his knuckles cracked. These people are masterminds at the brinkmanship of drawing that fine line between what will be overlooked and winked at and what will provoke an adverse reaction."

The "brinkmanship" represents a changed approach in comparison with USO shows of earlier years.

A Navy chaplain recalls that during World War II the actors "were not good, not even 'has-beens,' but 'never-would-be's' who were dodging the draft and getting paid to practice on a practically captive audience. . . . Our commanding officer finally got to the place where he would not book shows, saying that morally they were not worth the time and effort involved."

"Korea was a little different. Talent had profited by the practice of former years. Men would sit and drool at feminine pulchritude, and then stare with envy as some 'high brass' escorted the ladies off to officers' country while they returned to chilly corners of their tents to change into dry clothing."

The show troupes are known to be more prone to smut when they play in remote areas (an Army chaplain in the Arctic recently complained against the use of profanity, suggestive and provocative music and lyrics, and abbreviated costuming by female entertainers). But some troupes apparently have few qualms about use of ribald lines anywhere, even before servicemen's wives and children.

Notwithstanding, the level of entertainment is probably no worse morally than that often found on Broadway. What irks concerned religious leaders is that church money is being solicited to pay for such irreligious activity. Last

summer Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Jewish experts on military chaplaincy services joined in voicing an appeal for religious groups to increase their support of USO. The appeal, geared to coincide with a USO program to raise an \$11,000,000-a-year budget, came from Dr. Marion J. Creeger, executive secretary of the General Commission on Chaplains and Armed Forces Personnel, Msgr. Joseph F. Marbach, chancellor of the Roman Catholic Military Ordinariate, and Rabbi David M. Eichorn, director of field operations for the National Jewish Welfare Board's Commission on Jewish Chaplaincy.

There has recently been an encouraging trend in the USO show program toward more cultural entertainment. A number of college choral and orchestral groups now make annual overseas jaunts under USO sponsorship. There is every reason to believe that these are as much appreciated, and certainly far more wholesome, than the entertainers who stoop to smut.

So much is commendable in the overall USO effort that evangelicals profoundly lament the black eye of the touring troupes. It is probably for this reason as much as any that evangelicals have had a minimum of interest in USO activities. There is virtually no evangelical influence discernible in the USO planning and programming, despite the great opportunities that exist for extending genuine Christian service to members of the armed forces through this medium.

## Moral Re-Armament's Bid

The Moral Re-Armament movement is making its most sustained bid for support in Britain, according to a comprehensive report of the group's activities and philosophies by Ivan Yates of *The London Observer*.

Timing of the bid, made primarily through dozens of full-page newspaper advertisements, coincided with the appearance on the British scene of the latest MRA feature film, "The Crowning Experience."

Yates' report, which appeared in *The Washington Post and Times Herald* this month, said the film enterprise "displays many of the qualities that distinguished MRA: deep devotion ably exploited, a tendency to oversimplify and at the same time to exaggerate, a fondness for well-known names, a conspicuous lavishness unusual in either religious or political life—all harnessed to high-pressure publicity."

"No such publicity attended the birth



of MRA, or the Oxford Group, as it is still legally known in Britain. Indeed, it is difficult to say just when or where it was born, partly because its founder, Dr. Frank Buchman, has himself given currency to different versions at different times, partly because the movement began as a body of men doing similar work in different places without an organization to bind them together.

"Even today, though its world-wide activities are organized with remarkable precision, it prefers to be known as an organism, not as an organization. It prides itself on having no paid staff, no hierarchy, no membership, no subscription, no badges. You cannot join or resign; you belong."

Yates says MRA has "never burdened itself with doctrine and liturgy. It makes do with the four absolutes: absolute honesty, purity, unselfishness and love. The barrier to these is sin. Sin is washed away by 'sharing,' by confession followed by restitution. The barrier removed, the person is 'changed.' Thereafter he has one devotional practice and one duty. He must get 'guidance' in a 'quiet time' listening to God with pencil and paper—and he must seek to 'change' others."

In recent weeks, 72 full-page MRA

advertisements have appeared in British newspapers. Similar advertisements have appeared in the past in the United States. "This costly campaign represents MRA's most sustained bid yet for support in Britain," says Yates. "Yet, in spite of its extensive publicity, in spite of the large claims to influence and power made on its behalf, little is generally known of the real nature of MRA, its origins and development, its aims and achievements. Little has been revealed of the people who work for it and the source of their financial support."

Yates asserts that anti-communism is today "the most strident feature, the staple," of MRA propaganda.

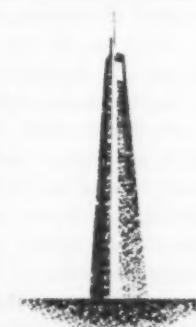
## Oxford Churchgoers

A survey conducted by the Oxford University undergraduate paper *Isis* concludes that the more highly educated a man is, the more likely it is that he will be a regular churchgoer.

Twenty-eight per cent of the students covered in the survey said they went to church at least once a week.

The figures indicate, therefore, that church attendance among Oxford students is much better than it is among the people of Britain as a whole.

Several recent surveys show that only about 16 per cent of the British population attends church regularly.



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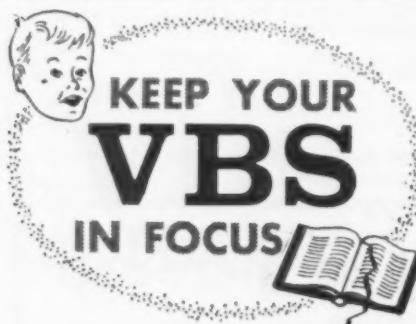
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## A Pastor's Rights

A Methodist pastor in Maine found himself at odds with his district superintendent over right-to-work legislation this month.

The dispute occasioned the withdrawal from active support of right-to-work legislation of Philip Alward, local preacher at Belfast Methodist Church.

Alward had testified before a state legislative committee in Augusta in support of a right-to-work bill. His withdrawal came after a conference with the district superintendent, the Rev. Edward F. Allen of Augusta, a leading opponent of the right-to-work bill.

Allen said the bill is not in line with the Social Action Creed of the Methodist Discipline of 1960 which reads, "We stand for the right to organize for collective bargaining. We stand for the right of employees and employers alike to organize for collective bargaining; protection of both in the exercise of their right; the responsibility of both to bargain in good faith; the obligation of both to work for the public good."

Alward apparently did not agree that the creed is to be interpreted as ruling out right-to-work legislation.

## Ministerial Refund

The Rev. Ira Gallaway, pastor of the Kirkwood Methodist Church in Irving, Texas, returned money to the federal government last month in protest of what he calls "a dangerous trend toward the welfare state."

Gallaway returned four Veterans Administration checks, endorsed to the U. S. Treasury, via Democratic Representative Olin E. Teague of Texas, chairman of the House Veterans Affairs Committee, asking that all further VA dis-

ability payments and VA life insurance dividends be stopped. One check was a \$39 life insurance dividend, the others, each for \$14.85, disability compensation. He received a wrist injury in World War II.

A congressional secretary, county judge, and oil company tax expert before entering the ministry, Gallaway told newsmen that "I've been taking those checks for years, but I became convinced that I don't deserve anything from the government."

He said he believed that if the government did not assume so many welfare functions more people would assume those responsibilities themselves.

"The government is making the shirking of responsibility easy. And the churches are partly the cause of this by not themselves taking seriously the call to practice charity and to show love toward all people."

## Flogging Probe

A Lutheran minister student says he was flogged by segregationists last month after he had moderated a human relations seminar in a church in Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

James David Fackler, a student at Concordia Seminary of St. Louis, was serving his vicarage (internship) in Tuscaloosa. He said he was seized one night outside the University Lutheran Church, blindfolded, and taken to a secluded swamp section where the abductors beat him severely.

They accused him of "bringing negroes into town and into the church," Fackler reported. Three Negroes had attended the seminar.

Church officials transferred Fackler and his wife to New Orleans. The FBI, meanwhile, launched an investigation.

## PEOPLE: WORDS AND EVENTS

**Deaths:** Dr. James H. Franklin, 89, former president of Crozer Theological Seminary; in Richmond, Virginia . . . Dr. W. Aiken Smart, 77, noted Methodist theologian; in Atlanta . . . Dr. Francis deWitt Batty, 82, retired Anglican Bishop of Newcastle, Australia; in Sydney . . . Dr. Nicholas Louvaris, 74, professor of theology at the University of Athens and former minister of education and cults; in Athens.

**Election:** As president of the Council of Bishops of The Methodist Church, Bishop Paul E. Martin.

**Appointment:** As professor of Assyriology at the University of London, Dr. Donald J. Wiseman.

**Quotes:** "Christ sent us into a service of witnessing. The United Nations is as fine a forum as can be found for witnessing because all nations of the earth are represented there." — Brooks Hays, in an interview in which he said he considered Southern Baptist Convention approval of his proposal to have an unofficial observer at the United Nations the most significant achievement of his administration as SBC president.

# Bible Book of the Month

## EZRA

BIBLE BOOK OF THE MONTH for June 22, 1959, was Nehemiah. Much of what was said concerning title and date for that book is relevant for the Book of Ezra, for there is every evidence that the two formerly existed as one. Ordinarily, Masoretic notations occur at the end of a book in the Hebrew Bible as an indication of the book's conclusion. This was a technique used for the preservation of textual purity. No such notation occurs at the close of our present Book of Ezra. However, we find notations at the conclusion of Nehemiah and these have reference to the material of both Ezra and Nehemiah, an indication that the two were considered together. Similar Masoretic notations were used to indicate the middle of a book, as in the case of Nehemiah 3:32. Here the remarks are further evidence of unity, for Nehemiah 3:32 is the middle of the Ezra-Nehemiah material. However, as early as around A.D. 400, both Latin and Greek Christians were treating Ezra and Nehemiah as separate books. One cannot be certain whether both parts are by one author or whether the Masoretes may have placed the two together because they dealt with similar settings and situations. A tracing of their exact relationship to each other is difficult due to (1) the various titles by which the books are called and (2) the internal textual variation. Sometimes the two are called I Esdras and at times, II Esdras. Generally, however, the title I Esdras is used to refer to a certain Greek rendering of Ezra which has as its introduction a duplication of the material from II Chronicles 35:1-36:21, and which internally has a different arrangement of the text. Our present Ezra 4:7-24 follows 1:3-11. In addition, there is other interpolated material which the usual biblical manuscripts exclude. Second Esdras ordinarily is a term used with reference to the material included as our canonical Ezra-Nehemiah.

No date is specified for either the books or their chief characters. The nearest thing to a specific date for Ezra is that he returned to Palestine in the seventh year of Artaxerxes, king of Persia (7:7), while Nehemiah returned in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes (Neh. 1:1 f.). The simple listing of the chronologies would place Nehemiah *after* Ezra, for certainly the twentieth year follows

the seventh. The arrangement of the books in our canon, Ezra preceding Nehemiah, would suggest the same, and thus has much of tradition surmised. It is strange that there is no notation as to which Artaxerxes is intended, for there were three in proximity—Artaxerxes I (464-424 B.C.), Artaxerxes II (404-358 B.C.), and Artaxerxes III (358-338 B.C.). External conditions would place the return in the reign or reigns of Artaxerxes I or II. Since the time of Hoonacker (1890-1924), there has been much effort to champion Nehemiah's precedence over Ezra. This would place Nehemiah in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes I, 444 B.C., and Ezra in the seventh year of Artaxerxes II, 397 B.C. This is not just a wild suggestion but one which is based primarily upon a study of the names of the high priests listed in Ezra-Nehemiah and upon finds from the island of Elephantine, located at the first cataract of the Nile River. However, as mentioned in the former article on Nehemiah, the data is at times conflicting, variously interpreted, and too complicated for discussion in the limited space available here. Fair and excellent summary treatment is to be found in H. H. Rowley's "The Chronological Order of Ezra and Nehemiah," in *The Servant of the Lord and Other Essays on the Old Testament*. A very readable and more recent attempt at reconstruction is to be found in John Bright's *A History of Israel* (pp. 363-386). Suffice it to say that the uncertainty and confusion as to textual arrangement, perplexity in dating, questions of precedence, and nonidentity of authorship may account for the fact that there is no New Testament reference to Ezra-Nehemiah. In the wake of such a long history of questions, it is understandable that there has been tension between those who, like Torrey, consider Ezra as nothing more than fictional imagination and others who take it at face value as literal history. But since one cannot be sure that the writer was seeking to give a strictly chronological history, perhaps a more accurate appraisal would be the middle course of acceptance with a consideration as to textual and source errors and transmission confusion.

Regardless of the point of view with which one approaches the book, the writing itself furnishes invaluable in-

sight into the conditions faced by those returning from exile. This is of more than historical value. Exilic release meant the possibility of covenant continuation with the inherent mission of sharing the covenant faith which the covenant implied. This New Exodus involved new opportunity, an opportunity which could be fulfilled only if Israel were characterized by pure faith, stable homes, and an uncompromised and non-syncretistic orthodoxy. Such was not the case, as the book relates. Therefore, Ezra had the tremendous task of issuing the call for separation. In so doing, he was at times cold, harsh, and uncompromising. Yet, faced not only with the covenant task but also a noncovenant-like people, he needed to be stern. As so often happens, Ezra, in trying to reach his goal, overemphasized and exaggerated one portion of it. Consequently, the purpose of separation—in order to be purified in preparation for the mission of sharing faith—was forgotten. Thus it was that in God's providence, a challenge to a universal mission, as is found in books like Jonah and Ruth, was necessary. We see the entire panorama as a wholesome revelation of God's plan and purpose for cultic and personal purity in order that the faith which the worship center and worship people represented might be shared with and witnessed to others. The Book of Ezra is quite important as a mirror in which to understand the larger world mission of the Church.

### THE CLARION CALL

Certainly the ministry of Ezra is to be remembered for its clarion call back to the Word of God. Were Ezra's ministry re-emphasized in modern terminology, it would be a call "back to the Bible." Preservation of the law was not enough (7:6); Ezra's concern was to transmit it, interpret it, and make it relevant for his people (7:10). It is not necessary to dwell at length on the identity of the law to which the people were called. The people readily accepted it as authoritative, and testimony was given that its basic contents were known to the prophets (9:10, 11). The period of the Exile had furnished time for reflection upon and the organization of written and oral traditions. This was a call to the formalized moral, ethical, and spiritual principles of the Pentateuch. The book makes it plain that the people themselves recognized the necessity of a continuation of Israel, and indeed the returning exiles considered themselves to be that Israel built around the revela-

tion of God. Though his position has not gained much momentum, Kurt Gallings' argument ("Gola-List According to Ezra 2/Nehemiah 7," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, LXX, 1951) that an effort was made to continue something of the earlier amphictyonic organization seems logical. Such an emphasis upon early tribal structure would naturally carry with it the emphasis of early Mosaic law and atmosphere.

Let it be stressed that any consideration of Ezra's pertinent value should not pass too quickly over the historical contribution of the book. The work of Albright and others (cf. W. F. Albright, *The Biblical Period*, p. 49) has established the historicity of the once questioned Edict of Cyrus (1:1 f.). There is no reason to question the Aramaic portions of the book. Those who hold them to be fabrications have no case; it was normal procedure for official correspondence, as the Aramaic in Ezra purports to be, to appear in the official language used by the Persian court (cf. *The Interpreter's Bible*, III, p. 557).

#### CONTENT

Perhaps the Book of Ezra can best be comprehended through the dual division of (1) The Early Return from Babylon (chaps. 1-6) and (2) The Career and Reforms of Ezra (chaps. 7-10).

1. *The Early Return from Babylon* (chaps. 1-6). Jeremiah had spoken of a seventy year captivity (29:10). Seventy subtracted from 605 B.C. (the time of the first captivity) gives about 536/535 B.C. Thus one gathers that Cyrus' edict, which allowed the return under Sheshbazzar (chaps. 1, 2), is testimony to God's providence. The favorable use of Cyrus is further testimony that God can take even a man of this world, a pagan, and use him as his servant. Isaiah 45:1 presents a similar situation.

The identification of Sheshbazzar, who planned with Cyrus concerning the initial return, is difficult. Albright's suggestion that the name linguistically is to be equated with Sin-ab-usur, the fourth son of Jehoiachin, is probably accurate (cf. *Journal of Biblical Literature*, XL, 1921, p. 108 f.). It is logical that he, as head of the remaining Davidic family, should have assumed a place of leadership in the preparations. He may have written the decree which Cyrus signed, thus authenticating the latter's decision to "let God's people go." Regardless of how the decree came about, the writer of the book definitely felt that the Lord moved Cyrus (1:1). How much validity Cyrus saw in Israel's witness to the ex-

clusive claim of Yahweh, it is impossible to tell. Nor will one ever know how much of the expression contained in the decree was mere lip service, mere accommodation to gain the favor of subject peoples. Elsewhere (the Cyrus Cylinder) Cyrus represents himself as the servant of the god Marduk, so he was not adverse to accommodation when it aided his own schemes. It is interesting to note (see the catalogue of returning Israelites in chap. 2) that this decree covered the entire territory which Cyrus controlled. Thus, Jews returned in 536, not only from the Babylonian but also from the Assyrian captivity. Consequently, to speak of "ten lost tribes" is a mistake. Remnants of northern and southern peoples returned.

Life back in Palestine (chaps. 3-6) was not as promising as it might have been. A good beginning was made as the people started rebuilding the Temple on the very spot where it had stood before (3:8). Five excellent qualities among the people made for a propitious start. Various groups gave freely (2:68); they gave proportionately (2:69); there was unanimity among them (3:1); there was appreciation for the revealed tradition (3:2 b); and their activity was joyful (3:11). But contrary to the old adage, not all that begins well ends well. Almost as it is today, there was internal unrest and external intervention. Some were disappointed in the new opportunities and mourned for the "good old days" (3:12). As if this were not disconcerting enough, Samaritan adversaries desired to participate in the task (4:1, 2). They claimed to worship the same deity the Israelites did, but because they came from an Assyrian background it must have been a syncretistic allegiance at best (4:2). Not bigoted exclusiveness but an appreciation of the dangers of being unequally yoked together caused the Israelites to deny the Samaritan request. Involved here is the principle of letting God's people do God's work (4:3). We note a parallel effort to intervene in the work in the reference to the "people of the land" (4:4). Those mentioned in verses 1 following and 4 are probably of the same group, for after the fall of the Northern Kingdom (722/21 B.C.) immigrants from Assyria intermarried with Israelites who were not taken into captivity. This union gave birth to the people called Samaritans whom the Jews considered half-breeds, not only in race but in culture and religion. Until the exiles were permitted to return, the Samaritans had been allowed to govern all of this section of

Palestine. Permission to take some of the territory and set up a self-governing province around Jerusalem certainly was not looked upon with favor; so it is doubtful that the Samaritan offer to help with the building task had any sincerity about it. In fact, the conspiracies reported in the succeeding passages prove that it was not. Opposition and discouragement from both internal and external sources were so momentous that the building task and the accompanying religious revival were discontinued. A time of general religious degeneration and deterioration set in and continued for a period of approximately sixteen years (4:24).

At this point, it should be mentioned that in chapters 4 and 5, there seems to be either chronological confusion or textual displacement, for chapter 4 makes reference to Ahasuerus (485-465 B.C.) and Artaxerxes (464-424 B.C.) while chapter 5 skips back to Darius who preceded these two, 522-485 B.C. There is justification here for the frequent suggestion that 5:1-6:18 formerly must have preceded 4:6-23. But at any rate the setting would indicate much frustration in the efforts to rehabilitate both civil and religious life. Fortunately Haggai and Zechariah, an older prophet and a younger prophet, were raised at the time to issue a prophetic challenge and recall to the task (5:1). After a lapse of so many years, there seemed to be hope again, but it was not easy. This was a time (c. 520 B.C.) of general unrest in the Persian Empire. Revolts were rampant in various sections of the Persian domain. Enemies of the Jews in Palestine immediately contacted Darius with the implication and inference that Jewish Temple rebuilding signified the seed of new revolt. However, a search of the official archives brought to light precedent and permission for the Jewish Temple, and official sanction was given to the project (chap. 6). Finally the Temple was finished in the sixth year of Darius, about 516 B.C. (6:15).

2. *The Career and Reforms of Ezra* (chaps. 7-10). It is not until chapter 7 that the reader is actually introduced to Ezra, the individual for whom the book was named. The return under Ezra (chaps. 7, 8) is prefaced by a remarkable statement of faith (8:22). Bold man that he was, he had expressed confidence in God's blessing upon the pilgrimage. He proceeded "from faith to faith" as a man traveling under a commission, for he was certain that God had tapped his shoulder (7:6).

As spiritual leader of the returning

band, Ezra must have returned homeward with a light step. Yet, upon his arrival, we note that he met with disappointment. The religious revival which formally broke out upon the completion of the Temple (6:16 f.) proved unfortunately to be as fleeting as the dew of the morning. Even the religious leaders were foremost in compromising with sin, the ugly sin of adultery and of idolatry. The spiritual mission was in reverse; the community had converted the church (9:1 f.)! Waiting and pleading as a true intercessor, Ezra's burdened prayer was one of thanksgiving for past opportunity and petition for forgiveness and additional opportunity for revival. Ezra recognized the immediate need for a genuine revival which might revitalize the covenant community. Consequently, the remainder of the book is dedicated to the reforms of Ezra (chaps. 9, 10). Much of the problem consisted of mixed marriages. If Ezra's reforms sound stern and overdrawn (and they were), remember his point of view that assimilation of the covenant people meant loss of covenant mission. Force cannot accomplish what is lacked in inward religious spontaneity. His legislation failed because the people soon returned to their compromised status. Nevertheless, the principle involved of the "purity of God's people" remains a valid one. It was a reluctant acquiescence (10:12, 13). Ensu ing history has indicated that the pattern was little bettered. The book ends in an atmosphere of suspension. There was yet needed someone to fulfill the covenant mission of voluntary and willing witness.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

In addition to the sources mentioned above, much value is to be gained from the use of *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah* (International Critical Commentary), by Loring W. Batten. A somewhat more conservative treatment, though brief, is to be found in *An Introduction to the Old Testament*, by Edward J. Young. Other helpful materials are discussions in *Israel After the Exile* (The Clarendon Bible), by W. F. Lofthouse; *Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther* (The Expositor's Bible), by Walter F. Adeney; *Understanding the Old Testament*, by Bernhard W. Anderson; and *A Light to the Nations*, by Norman K. Gottwald.

RALPH H. ELLIOTT

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Theological Seminary

## Books in Review

### MATTHEW'S TESTIMONY AND MODERN CRITICISM

*The Gospel According to St. Matthew*, by Floyd V. Filson (Harper, 1960, 314 pp. \$5), is reviewed by Ned B. Stonehouse, Professor of New Testament, Westminster Theological Seminary.

In this contribution to the series of Harper's New Testament Commentaries, the author, well-known McCormick scholar, has been mainly concerned to make clear how the evangelist, whom he distinguishes from the Apostle Matthew, "understood the gospel story and what he wanted the Church to get from his book." This concern has in many respects been admirably achieved especially when one considers the severe limitations of space. In the main Dr. Filson sticks closely to his last. And the volume reflects his ability to write succinctly and pointedly without sacrifice of clarity.

Although Dr. Filson occupies a negatively critical position, so far as the authority of Scripture is concerned, and shares to a significant degree the modern view that Matthew is representative of theological and practical viewpoints which developed in the Church after the death of Christ, his critical position is far more conservative than that of many contemporary New Testament scholars. One may single out, for example, his defense of the essential authenticity of the Matthaean record of Christ's declarations concerning the Church in Matthew 16 (p. 186). Refreshing too is the observation that he stresses the decisive significance of the resurrection of Christ, and maintains in this connection that "the tomb was empty" and that no theory is satisfactory which "limits the resurrection to psychological recovery by the disciples or a purely spiritual survival by Jesus" (pp. 302 ff., cf. pp. 40 f.).

Nevertheless the author makes clear again and again that he does not wish to align himself unmistakably on the side of the testimony of this Gospel. How equivocal his position is may be best illustrated by his comment on the attitude that one should take toward the virgin birth of Christ. He says: "This theological affirmation of the unique, purposeful work of God in sending Jesus Christ into the world is essential to the gospel story. Whoever takes the birth story as poetic and figurative must take care not to drain away the vigor and firmness of that affirmation. On the other hand, those

who, to protect the divine initiative and to centre God's historical working in Christ, accept literally the story that Jesus had no earthly father must preserve the New Testament conviction that Jesus was born as a real human being and lived a truly human life" (p. 56). To be sure, there is no place for Docetism in the New Testament, but the acceptance of the Virgin Birth or its rejection is not basically an issue regarding balance in one's Christology but of the trustworthiness of Scripture. Of a piece with this attitude toward the Matthaean record are some of the author's comments on miracle stories. With regard to the record of Matthew 17:24, for example, he says: "A figurative statement of Jesus may have developed into a miracle story in the course of transmission. If so, this could only happen because the Church knew that Jesus had done many remarkable things, and this did not seem an impossible addition to the list" (p. 196; cf. p. 172).

In my judgment the rejection of the tradition of apostolic authorship is a quite different matter from the rejection of the testimony of Scripture itself. Nevertheless, Dr. Filson's argument here is quite unimpressive (cf. p. 20).

NED B. STONEHOUSE

#### THIRTY CONVERSIONS

*Evangelical Conversion in Great Britain 1696-1845*, by T. W. B. Bullock (Budd & Gillatt, 1959, 287 pp., 35s.), is reviewed by Herbert M. Carson, Vicar of St. Paul's, Cambridge.

Apart from a short introduction, this book consists of two main sections. The first, which comprises about two-thirds of the total work, describes 30 actual conversion experiences from the period under review (incidentally, it is not quite clear why the particular dates are selected for the survey). The second section is a psychological study of the cases cited earlier.

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figures like the Wesleys, Whitefield, and Robert Murray McCheyne, and also others who are probably unknown to most readers. The accounts tend to vary in value depending upon the measure of treatment accorded. But on the whole the accounts given are carefully and attractively presented, and the fact that a great deal of the material used is autobiographical makes them even more compelling. This part of the book is really valuable.

One major lack, however, in the underlying assumptions of the book is a failure to take into account the work of the Holy Spirit in awakening men. An allied failure is an apparent inability to recognize the nature of a true revival in the sense of a sovereign act of God, so that again and again revivals are confused with revivalism. In fact here perhaps we get the real weakness of the treatment, in that it is essentially man-centered rather than God-centered. Thus where Scripture would see the convicting work of the Holy Spirit, the author describes the experience as the end product of a purely human reaction.

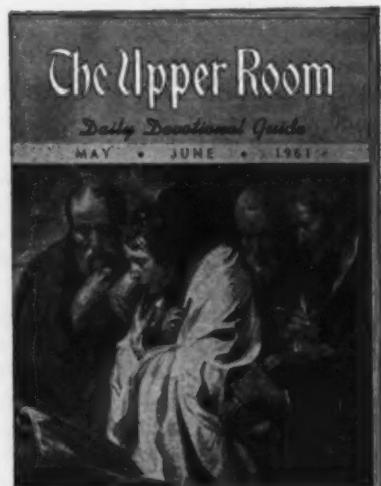
It may be objected that such a critique of the work ignores the whole aim of the book which is to give a purely psychological description. To go beyond that is to enter the realm of theology. But the very failure to deal adequately with the experiences under review shows the inevitable flaw in such a purely psychological approach to conversion. It is a treatment of the subject which fails to take into account the most important factor, namely the work of God. Hence while it may describe—and this book does in many ways admirably describe—the emotional and psychological factors which enter into the experience, it fails to lift the subject to the only level where it can really be understood. The understanding of conversion in these pages rarely seems to get beyond the man and the changes in him. While those whose conversions are described are clearly shown to have become God-centered, the discussion of their experience remains very much man-centered.

HERBERT M. CARSON

### DIVINITY OF CHRIST

Son and Saviour, a symposium (Chapman, 1960, 151 pp., 12s. 6d.), is reviewed by David F. Wright, Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.

The flyleaf describes these essays as "standing firm on up-to-date biblical criticism, yet written for the nonexpert reader, sound, critical and catholic in approach,



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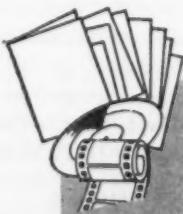
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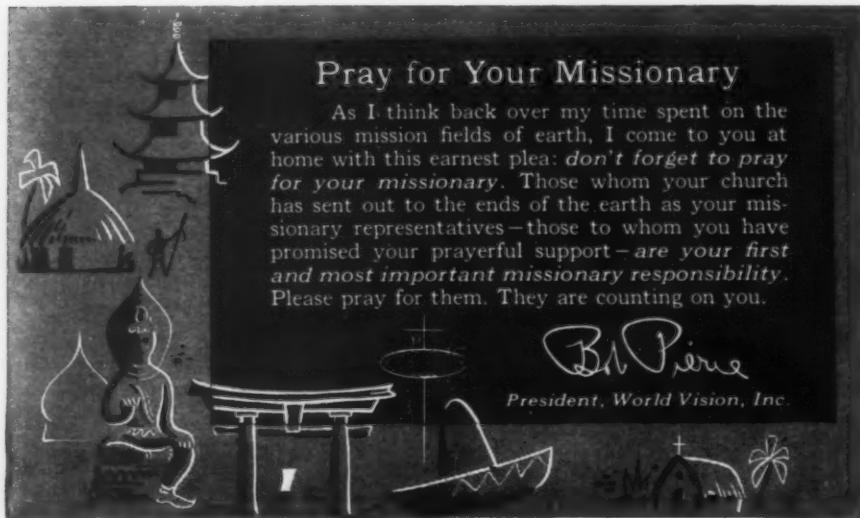
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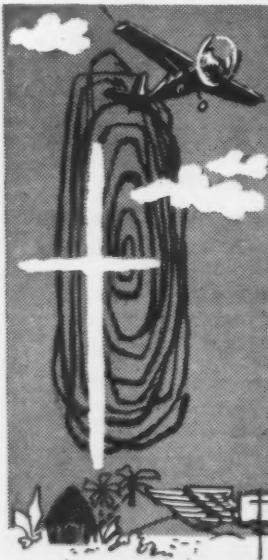
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stimulating in matter." The layman will not often find himself out of his depth, though he may be puzzled by references to "the Pasch" and "the sapiential literature." A critical approach generally reaches conservative conclusions, whether on the synoptists' portrait of Jesus, or on the historicity of early Acts and of the Johannine Jesus, "those facts of Christ's life which John chose to preserve" (p. 121).

The last essay is the best, containing clear expositions of "glory" and of the essential dependence of the mission of Jesus upon his nature. The Jewish background to the doctrinal content is affirmed, and the chapter is marred only by a strange and unexplained preference for the variant and much inferior reading of the singular in John 1:13, which refers the verse to Christ (similarly another contributor regards Acts 8:37 as authentic). The other essays may not reach the high standard of the last, but they provide a good introduction to Christology, almost completely free from "Catholic" bias (Protestant writers are regularly cited with approval), scholarly, and faithfully scriptural.

Perhaps the first essay is least satisfactory, where we read that "none of the types of (the Messiah) bore the dignity of God" in Jewish expectation (p. 13), an opinion open to question in the light of such references as Psalm 2, 7, 45, 6 and Isaiah 9:1-6, "none of which affirms the 'divine nature' and 'divine attributes' of the Messiah." In the last passage we are told that "the phrase 'Mighty God' could only have been understood in the sense of 'godly nobleman'" (p. 17). A few criticisms must not deter us from this fine example of modern French Roman Catholic biblical study. D. F. WRIGHT

### BUNYAN'S LAST WORK

*The Acceptable Sacrifice or The Excellency of a Broken Heart* (obtainable from O. G. Pearce, The Retreat, Harpenden, Herts., England, 1959, 108 pp., 5s. 6d.), is reviewed by Joyce M. Wilkinson, Traveling Secretary of Inter-Varsity Fellowship and formerly Research Worker at Somerville College, Oxford.

This little-known work of Bunyan is an exposition of Psalm 51:17, and deals with the subject of repentance and grief for sin. With typical Puritan pastoral concern and thoroughness, Bunyan analyzes such questions as how one recognizes a broken heart and contrite spirit, why a profound conviction of sin is nec-

essary, the salutary results of a broken heart, and how a Christian may keep his heart tender.

The book reflects Bunyan's own experience described in *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*, when he labored under an acute consciousness of sin for two years before being assured of his salvation. Eminently readable, it is written in the simple language of country people, as this extract may show: "Yet, further, God doth not only prefer such an one before heaven and earth, but He loveth, He desireth to have that man for an intimate, for a companion; He must dwell, He must cohabit with him that is of a broken heart. . . . Verily this consideration is enough to make the brokenhearted man creep into a mouse-hole." Not only preachers and pastors but every Christian will be instructed by this reminder of the holiness of God; it is indeed a relevant and practical re-publication when one of the reasons for much of the current spiritual shallowness appears to be a failure to reckon with the seriousness of sin.

J. M. WILKINSON

#### HAS ROME CHANGED?

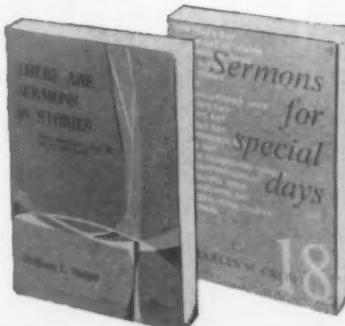
*We Hold These Truths: Catholic Reflections on the American Proposition*, by John Courtney Murray, (Sheed & Ward, 1960, 336 pp., \$5), is reviewed by C. Gregg Singer, Professor of History, Catawba College.

Reviewing this book would be a much easier assignment if one were not convinced of the sincerity which lies behind the attempt, on the part of a prominent Catholic scholar, to bring about a *modus vivendi* between the Roman Catholic church in this country and American democracy. The author reduces the problem to its simplest terms and locates the whole issue in the American proposition which he finds in these truths concerning human equality which the Declaration of Independence declares as self-evident. In his foreword, Dr. Murray raises the fundamental question around which this collection of essays revolves. Declaring that it is impertinent to ask whether Catholicism is compatible with American democracy, he reverses the question and asks whether American democracy is compatible with Catholic theology. To this latter question he then gives an affirmative answer.

Finding the setting for the problems which he discusses in the pluralistic framework of American society, he proceeds to examine the nature and implications of this pluralism for the Roman

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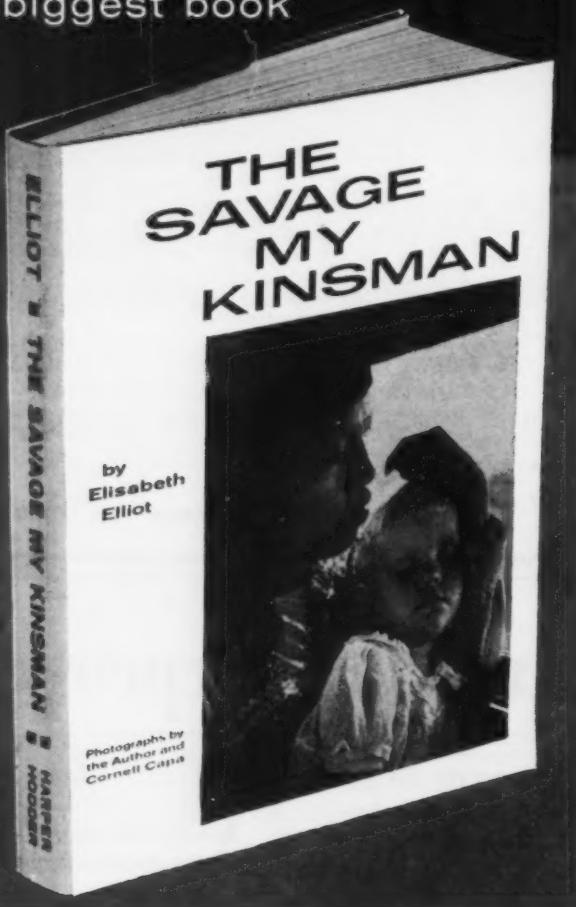
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Catholic church in this country. The frank admission that this pluralism, as it exists in America, is unique in the modern world and is quite different from that which prevails in Europe is, in the opinion of this reviewer, evidence of the sincerity of the author on the whole. He realizes that pluralism is the native condition of American society and that it did not come about as a result of the corruption or decay of a previously existing religious unity such as was the case in Europe. It is this essential difference between the pluralism of contemporary Europe, and that which has prevailed in this country from its beginnings, which provides the opportunity for an agreement between American democracy and the Roman church.

Dr. Murray then attempts to prove that there is no basic incompatibility between the two systems. He achieves this result by a process of reasoning which involves the argument that the basic proposition of the American consensus was quite different from that of the radicalism of the Jacobins of the French Revolution. That this is a valid assumption may well be doubted, and later on Dr. Murray himself proceeds to destroy it in his well-founded attack on the philosophy of John Locke whose system underlay the philosophy of both the American and French Revolutions. In attacking Locke, Murray destroys the very area of possible agreement which he defined in part one of his book.

When the reader arrives at part four, however, he soon learns that the common ground for both parties is actually to be found only in the Thomistic conception of the natural law philosophy. This reviewer agrees with his sharp criticisms of Locke, but he would point out that to destroy Locke is not to enshrine Thomas Aquinas, and that is exactly what Dr. Murray does. The compatibility between American democracy and Roman Catholicism is thus to be rooted and grounded in the Thomistic version of natural law.

Thus, this reviewer must conclude that, in spite of a sincere desire to find a possible *modus vivendi*, Dr. Murray has not actually made any significant change in the orientation of the Roman Catholic church toward the issues of American democracy. Even going one step further, he would add the fact that he is rather glad that the author failed. For it is apparent that if the Roman church were to accommodate itself in the manner set forth in part one, the Roman church would cease to be a church and become all too similar to liberal Protestantism.

which, in its desire to conform to the demands of the democratic philosophy, has sold its soul to the enemies of the Cross.

C. GREGG SINGER

#### REFERENCE BIBLE

Dake's *Annotated Reference Bible, New Testament* (with Daniel, Psalms, and Proverbs) by Finis J. Dake (Zondervan, 1961, 488 pp., \$7.95), is reviewed by R. Laird Harris, Professor of Old Testament, Covenant Theological Seminary.

This book is an extensive cross-reference and chain-reference Bible with much encyclopedic and explanatory material and an extensive index included. The viewpoint is approximately that of the Scofield Bible. The method of listing "15 doctrines," "19 reasons," etc., will appeal to many, but seems somewhat elementary. A good book, but should be used with standard Bible dictionaries and works of reference. R. LAIRD HARRIS

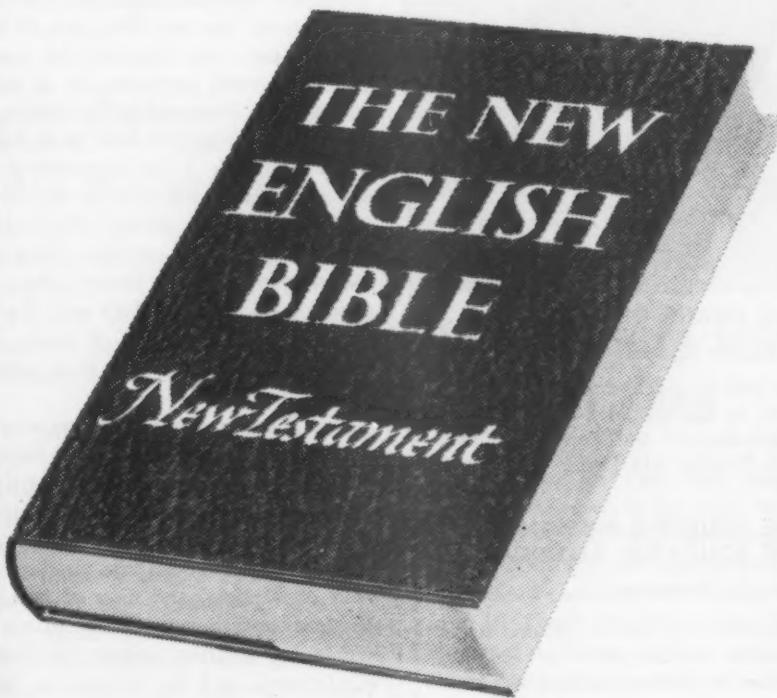
#### BAPTISTS AND BAPTISM

*A Baptist Treasury*, compiled and edited by Sydnor L. Stealey (Crowell, 1958, 323 pp., \$3.95); *A History of Baptists in America Prior to 1845*, compiled by Jesse L. Boyd, (American Press, 1957, 205 pp., \$3); and *The Meaning of Baptism*, by John Frederick Jansen (Westminster, 1958, 125 pp., \$2.50), are reviewed by Harold Lindsell, Dean of the Faculty and Professor of Missions, Fuller Theological Seminary.

President Stealey of Southeastern Baptist Seminary has performed a service in bringing together this collection of Baptist writings under the title, *A Baptist Treasury*. The volume is in six sections with writings related to the subject of each section: Baptist Beginnings; Confessions, Cathechism, Church Covenants; Some Baptist Controversies; Distinctive Baptist Principles; Sermons and Addresses; and Hymns and Prayers. The expected problem of what to include and what to leave out was evidently perplexing. Yet the author's choices show balance and perspective.

Baptists would do well to read this volume, for few have much sense of historical perspective and many entertain naive conceptions of their antecedents. Particularly illuminating are the documents which reveal the doctrinal differences of Baptists. The choice of Benjamin Mays' (a Negro) address on race relations was a happy one, although

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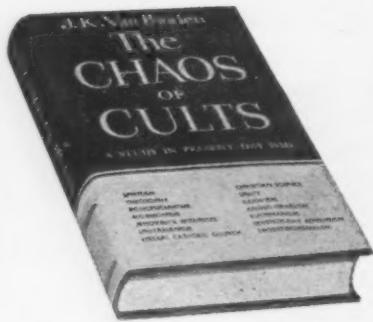
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his conclusions on the unity of the race and the oneness of believers without respect to race are old. It is unfortunate that there could not have been something extant which would suggest creative solutions to the problem, the principles of which are all too obvious.

Boyd's compendium, *A History of Baptists in America Prior to 1845*, is exactly that. He compiled the material for background purposes in a college course. The material is fascinating but its use is limited because it is only a compilation. It lacks organization and integration, but this is to be expected in a work of such a nature. The bibliography is far from complete: Newman's volume on Baptist history does not appear, although Vedder's and Torbet's do. There are pictures of many early Baptist leaders, and this is a valuable contribution.

The reviewer cannot imagine why the third volume, *The Meaning of Baptism*, was included in this triad. The latter volume has nothing to do with Baptists and should hardly be reviewed by one. It comprises 21 meditations on the sacrament of Baptism, and most of it relates to infant baptism at that. The author has a flair for creative writing, is himself widely read, and has drawn on interesting sources for illustrative material. Conservative, liberal, and neo-orthodox names abound. The hymns and poetry are generally in the orthodox tradition. Dr. Jansen says in his preface that he "does not attempt to argue for the validity of infant Baptism"; however, he violates this principle and practically gives away his case when he says, "We do not rest the case for infant Baptism on any number of proof texts; we rest it rather on the meaning of Baptism and on the reality of a people of God." He finds "a trace of the baptismal formula" in the "story of Jesus and the children." From this he argues that we ought not to forbid baptism to children. The logic is bad and the biblical evidences are nonexistent.

Each meditation is prefaced by a Scripture quotation. Too often they are not texts but pretexts. Allegorizing is too frequent. Perhaps the gravest weakness of the book is the author's use of paradox. It takes strange forms. Baptism saves and does not save. It depends on which meditation you happen to read. "Baptism assures me that God has given me his name . . ." (p. 41). "There is one body. . . And Baptism expresses our initiation into this one body . . ." (p. 122). He argues that one goes back to his baptism with spiritual value. "Jesus

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HAROLD LINDSELL

### REBIRTH OF A NATION

*The Rebirth of the State of Israel*, by Arthur W. Kac (Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1958, 387 pp., \$3.50), is reviewed by Eric Edwin Paulson, Minister, Lutheran Free Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

No contemporary event has been of greater significance to Bible believers than Israel's re-establishment as a nation in 1948. Students of the prophetic Word have also been thrilled as they have witnessed Israel's steady growth economically and culturally.

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Although this is a scholarly book, it is written in a manner that will make it equally appealing to laymen and pastors. Students of prophecy, who have yearned for a fresh exposition of Scripture as this applies to present-day events, will find this volume most satisfying. It should also become required reading for all theological students.

ERIC EDWIN PAULSON



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**BULTMANN DEMYTHOLOGIZED**

*The Scope of Demythologizing, Bultmann and His Critics*, by John Macquarrie (Harper, 1960, 256 pp., \$4.50), is reviewed by Robert Paul Roth, Professor of New Testament Theology, Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary.

This book is a valiant attempt to defend the work of Rudolf Bultmann against critics on the right (Barth, Cullinan, Thielicke, Malevez) who charge that demythologizing will reduce Christian faith to a philosophy of human existence, and against critics on the left (Buri, Jaspers) who feel that Bultmann has not gone far enough but has arbitrarily stopped short in retaining the *kerygma* as myth because of too narrow views on grace and revelation.

There is a limit to demythologization which the author, John Macquarrie of Glasgow University, assures has been recognized by Bultmann. An adequate theology would require both a minimum factuality of the events reported in the New Testament and the transcendent reality of God in Christ as the being encountered in the *kerygma*. But Buri's understanding of the grace of existence fails adequately to describe the Christian experience of the unique grace in Christ, and Jasper's conception of general revelation leaves no room for the special encounter in the Gospel.

In addition there is a valuable chapter on the analysis of language, especially the meaning of words like myth, symbol, analogy, and legend.

The importance of this book is pointed up by the comment of Paul Tillich: "When you come to Europe today . . . it is Rudolf Bultmann who is the center of discussion." It would seem, however, that in his defense Macquarrie protests too much, so much as to have demythologized Bultmann. ROBERT PAUL ROTH

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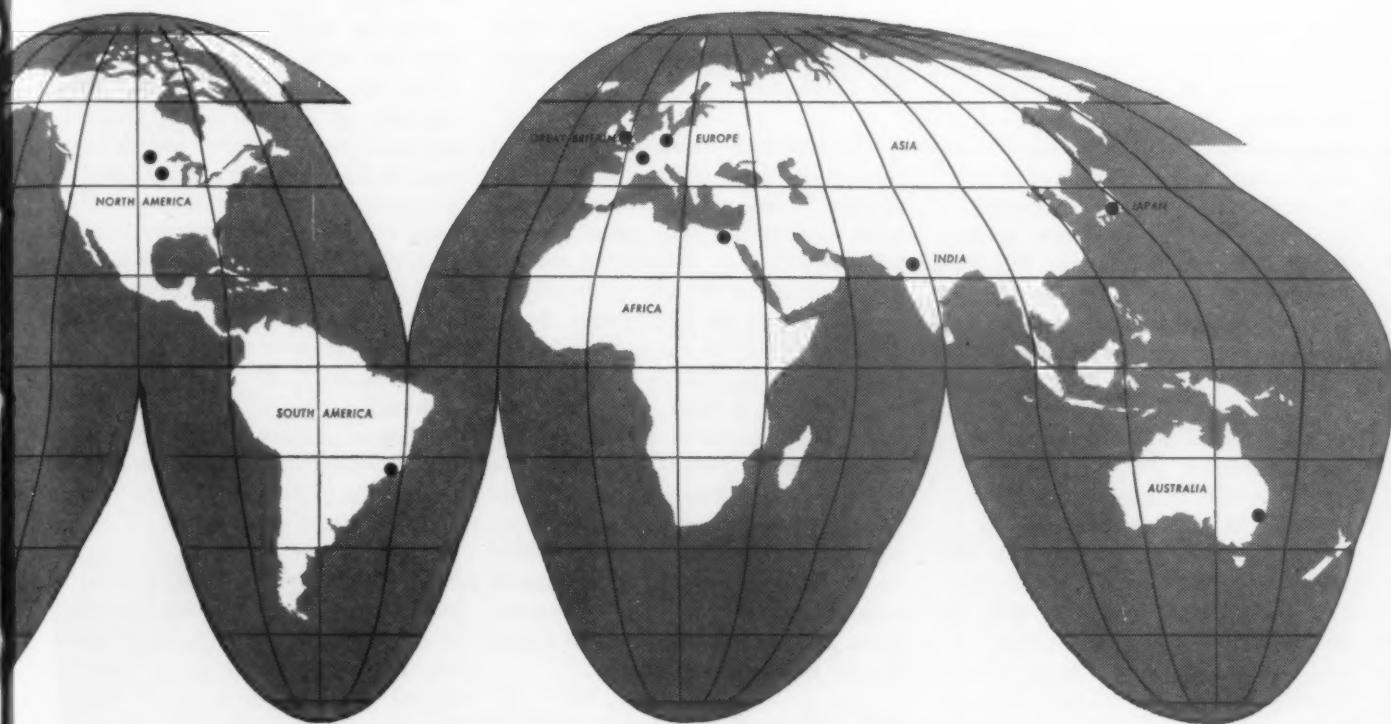


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REVIEW OF

## Current Religious Thought

THE CHURCH AND its theology—like many other things—is often put before the dilemma of being conservative or progressive. In spite of repeated attempts to show how false this dilemma is, it manages to keep its power to falsify the truth. The terms vary. Sometimes it is put as conservative versus modern. But the dilemma is the same. We wish to point out that his way of stating the alternatives that face the Church and theology gives us no help at all in analyzing the theological situation.

¶ It is not hard to illustrate how useless the conservative versus progressive approach to the characterization of men and thought is. Take Jeremiah, for instance. This prophet was the man who called the people back to "the old paths" (Jer. 6:16) and who was also the prophet of the "new covenant" (Jer. 31:31). Consider Paul also. The apostle told Timothy to hold fast to that which he had received (I Tim. 6:20). Yet, no one was more possessed with the vision of the *new* than was Paul (cf. II Cor. 5:17). One quickly senses how meaningless the opposition between "conservative" and "progressive" becomes when it is used to typify men and their positions. This is especially true when the term "conservative" is meant to describe someone who cleaves to the past and turns away from the future.

¶ Many modern theological movements today manifest strong conservative tendencies. Consider the powerfully conservative attitude that liberal theology has shown in regard to miracles. Liberal theology has held on to the old attitudes regarding myth and world-view, redemption and Christ, and many other positions typical of the nineteenth century. Liberals still consider old positions untouchable. Whenever someone declines this conservative attitude and seeks with new joy to develop the perspectives of the Holy Scriptures, when someone, that is, tries to shed himself

of the stubborn conservatism of liberal theology, he is branded as a "conservative theologian."

¶ The zeal with which many orthodox theologians have staked claim on the adjective "conservative" is, in my judgment, regrettable. They mean by their self-designation as conservative to take their position on the side of the Gospel and the faith of the Reformation. Sometimes one means by the term "conservative" to indicate that he is not liberal. But we must, I think, get away from this defensive tactic; we must decline the conservative - progressive dilemma. We ought not to be forced to accept either horn of the dilemma; we ought not accept the term conservative as describing our position. The word does nothing to suggest the presence of the dynamic power and the perspective for the future that are inherent in the Gospel.

¶ To call the Reformation a conservative movement is on the face of it a bad half-truth. To be sure, the Reformers reached back across the centuries to the old Gospel. But they also looked to the renewal of all of life through the Gospel. And life was renewed. Preaching was again set in the center of the Church. Scholars went at the serious business of exegesis the Word from which, in turn, all sorts of new perspectives came to light, perspectives for the practical life of the people. The false dilemma, "progressive" or "conservative," in no way really illuminates what happened at the Reformation.

¶ The broad divisions between the theological schools are real and significant. But these divisions are not clarified in the least by calling one side conservative and the other side progressive. Surely, orthodoxy does not swear by the old while liberal theology searches for new perspectives. The Gospel does not face us with an option between old and new, as such. The choice presented by

the Gospel is that between the power and blessing of the new life in Christ and the weakness of the old nature and the old dispensation.

¶ I strongly suspect that we are talking about more than mere words. A confusion has arisen from the habit many have had of seeing a basic polarity between the conservative and progressive attitudes. A bad and wrong impression has been created by the orthodox's acceptance of the designation of their position as "conservative." The theology which seeks to live and work by the Word of God, the Word which is always in movement toward new paths of power, is not conservative. But the impression created by letting the liberal position take possession of the word "progressive" is just as wrong. Liberal theology is showing its bondage to traditional ways more clearly than ever these days. Liberalism is bound to the past; it shuts the door to the new and unexpected.

¶ There is always the danger of trying to preserve what is not worth preserving. We always run the temptation of refusing to follow the new ways to which the Gospel calls us. There is the danger that, flying the conservative banner, we lose our power to speak to the modern world, that we give the impression that the Gospel, interpreted by conservatives, has nothing to say to modern man. To avoid the dangers, we must continuously, earnestly, and with intellectual integrity keep close to the Bible. We cannot rest with the delusion that we have rather completely grasped what there is to be known from the Bible. Fresh biblical research is constantly necessary; where it goes on things can happen to break new ground for the Church. Renewal in theology as well as in the Church comes only where men bow with open ears before the Word. For men who really do listen to the Word, there is no such thing as a dilemma between the progressive and the conservative way of looking at things. The Gospel transcends this false dilemma. We must refuse to let ourselves be branded as conservative. Conservatism is not the mark of the man who lives and works in the truth and power of the Gospel.

G. C. BERKOUWER